COLONIAL REPORTS—ANNUAL.

No. 1039.

NEW HEBRIDES.

REPORT FOR 1920.

LONDON:
PUBLISHED BY HIS MAJESTY'S STATIONERY OFFICE.

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1921

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No. 1099.

NEW HEBRIDES.

REPORT FOR 1920.

GENERAL.

The New Hebrides, to which are attached the Banks and Torres Islands, lie between the 12th and 20th degrees of south latitude, and the 165th and 170th degrees of east longitude, and have an area of about 5,700 square miles. The natives are Melanesians, but in places there is a mixture of Polynesian blood.

A joint Naval Commission was established in 1888, by agreement with France, to protect the lives and property of British and French subjects and to maintain order. By the Convention of 20th October, 1906, a Condominium was set up with a joint Court composed of British and French Judges and a neutral President; and an executive government consisting for some purposes of the British and French representatives in the group acting in concert. For other purposes British and French nationals remain subject to the control only of their national authorities.

The British and French Resident Commissioners are subordinate to the High Commissioner for the Western Pacific and the High Commissioner at Nouméa respectively.

REVENUE AND EXPENDITURE.

Comparative Yearly Statement of the Revenue.

	1919.			1920.		
Condominium Revenue :—	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
Post Office	402	4	0	759	5	4
Port Dues	200	4	0	293	5	2
Joint Court	68	1	0	8	1	6
Import Duties	8,634	16	10	16,224	10	10
Export Duties	167	8	10	2,172	11	0
Wireless	468	16	4	454	9	2
Miscellaneous	193	4	0	595	1	2
Total Condominium Revenue	10,134	15	0	20,507	4	2
	1919–1920			1920–1921		
British Revenue in periods :—						
Fines, Fees, Licences, &c.	98	6	4	122	17	4
Interest on Furniture	11	16	7	10	15	4
Rents	38	0	0	87	10	0
Income Duty	252	13	11	227	10	11
Total British Revenue	400	16	10	448	13	7

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Comparative Yearly Statement of the Expenditure.

	1919. £ s. d.	1920. £ s. d.
Condominium Expenditure :—		
Joint Court	4,554 0 2	3,309 0 8
Constabulary	1,613 0 10	2,070 2 10
Post Office	735 13 6	768 4 6
Public Works (Annual)	551 10 8	1,444 10 8
Port and Harbour	140 2 10	200 11 10
Public Works (Extraordinary) ..	286 19 4	7 12 0
Island Services	683 2 6	832 4 2
Medical	76 2 6	82 18 10
Customs	523 15 2	571 3 0
Telegraph and Telephones	806 0 2	2,049 10 0
Miscellaneous	576 18 6	5,089 4 6
Total Condominium Expenditure ..	10,547 6 2	16,425 3 0
Expenditure on Services exclusively British for periods :—	1919–1920	1920–1921
Establishment	2,484 5 2	2,190 4 9
Travelling : Government Yacht ..	4,174 11 7	8,757 4 5
,, Boat's Crew ..	234 14 2	297 8 4
Medical	250 0 0	250 0 0
Prison	4 7 7	25 19 0
Incidentals	358 15 9	742 1 4
Total Expenditure on Services exclusively British.	7,506 14 3	12,262 17 10

In considering the figures in these tables it must always be borne in mind that, so far as Condominium Receipts and Expenditure are concerned, the sterling values are merely nominal. All payments to the Condominium Treasury, with the exception of a very small amount, are, and have been for a long period, made in French currency ; as a natural consequence all local disbursements are in the same medium ; payment for supplies from Australia having, of course, to be made in sterling. The rate of exchange as between French and English currency has, during the year, varied from Frs.40·00 to Frs.60·00 to the pound sterling, and as, for purposes of official account, the old par rate of Frs.25·00 to the pound sterling has been preserved, some idea can be formed of the real amount that the figures shown would represent in sterling.

All the important items show increases, especially those of Post Office, Port Dues, and Import and Export Duties due to increased taxation. Those increases were :—(1) Postage to Great Britain and France and French and British Possessions advanced to 2d. (or 20c.) per 20 grammes ; (2) Port Dues raised from 3d. (30c.) to 5d. (50c.) per ton ; (3) Import Duties on tobacco, cigars and cigarettes, and spirits, raised from 11½d. (Frs.1·20) to 1s. 7d. (Frs.2·00), 3s. 2½d. (Frs.4·00) to 5s. 7d. (Frs.7·00), and 10s. 10d. (Frs.13·50) to 18s. (Frs.22·50) respectively ; and (4) Export Duties of £4 and 10s. per ton were imposed on trochus shell and copra. Much of the increase

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in receipts of Import Duties was due to an alteration in the system of calculating the rates in French currency of imports invoiced in British currency. Previously such rates had been calculated at the par rate of Frs.25·00 to pound sterling, a system which obviously operated greatly to the prejudice of the Condominium Treasury. Provision was accordingly made that the values of such goods when import duty is paid in French currency should be calculated at the current rate of exchange. Telephone subscriptions were raised from £2 to £6 per annum.

There is no public debt.

POPULATION.

The statement of the non-native population below gives all the information available under this head, and shows the settlers of pure European descent to number 946, and the Asiatic and others 354, a total of 1,300. Those of French birth outnumber the British by nearly 150 per cent., and show an increase of 65 since 1910, while the decrease in the number of British born in the same period amounts to 26. In 1910 the numbers were 566 and 288, respectively.

As regards the distribution of the European population, nearly 50 per cent. of the French are settled in the town of Vila and neighbourhood, Santo coming next in this respect. Of the British less than one quarter are resident in Vila ; the greater proportion are in the islands. There are no French in the Southern Islands, nor in the Banks Group.

Of the British subjects it will be noticed that those born in the British Isles and the Dominions respectively are about equal in number. As my information is incomplete as to the places of origin of the wives of the settlers who come under this head, I have included them with their husbands. French settlers born in New Caledonia are considered as of French birth.

The decrease in the British population is chiefly due to the reduction of the stations of the Presbyterian Missions. In 1910 there were 22 missionaries of that denomination with their families in the group. At the present time there are but 11.

The native population is estimated at 58,700. The total, it will be noticed, shows a falling off from that given in my report of 1910 of about 7,000. I was prepared to find a much greater diminution than my figures show ; but although there has undoubtedly been much mortality on some islands due to dysentery and other affections that have at times almost assumed an epidemic form, other islands can, I believe, even boast an annual increase.

NON-INDIGENOUS POPULATION OF THE NEW HEBRIDES.

1920.

BRITISH.

Description.	Adult Males.	Females and children.	Totals.
British Subjects :—			
British born	57	67	124
Dominion born (Australia, New Zealand and Canada).	49	72	121
Colonies	7	10	17
,, (Asiatics)	5(*a*)	—	5
	118	149	267
Foreign subjects under British régime :—			
European	10	11	21
Asiatic	29(*b*)	—	29
Totals	157	160	317

(*a*) Chinese.
(*b*) Chinese, 23 ; Japanese, 6.

FRENCH.

Description.	Adult Males.	Females and children.	Totals.	Grand Total.
French Citizens :—				
French birth (*a*)	275	356	631	755
,, Colonies (*b*) ..	25	—	25	146
,, Colonies (Asiatics) (*c*)	165	—	165	187
	465	356	821	
Foreign subjects under French régime :—				
European	14	18	32	53
Asiatics (*d*)	130	—	130	159
	609	374	983	1,300

(*a*) Many of these are natives of New Caledonia, but number cannot be given.
(*b*) Natives (aboriginals) of Loyalty Islands.
(*c*) Natives of Indo-China Protectorate. Some are females, but number cannot be given.
(*d*) Javanese 72. Number of females cannot be given.
Chinese 31. No females.
Japanese 27. No females.

Analysis :— Of pure European descent 946
Of Asiatic origin 329
Of Melanesian origin 25
1,300

ECCLESIASTICAL.

The principal Missions operating in the group are :—(1) The Presbyterian, whose sphere of influence may be said to be the Southern Group and the Central, with the exception of Aoba, Pentecost, and Maeovo; and (2) The Marist (Roman Catholic), whose operations extend all over the Central Group with the exception of Maeovo. The Melanesian Mission (Anglican) works on Aoba, Pentecost, Maeovo, and the Banks and Torres Groups ; while the Seventh Day Adventists and Church of Christ have small followings on Malekula, Santo, Aoba, and Pentecost.

The only place of worship in the Group that is not a Mission Church is the Roman Catholic " Cathedral " at Vila.

EDUCATION.

There are three primary schools in the town of Vila, one of which was built (in 1916), and is entirely maintained, by the French Government. It has 14 scholars, all girls. The other two, which are maintained by the Marist Mission and the Sisters of St. Joseph respectively, have 42 boys and 29 girls.

Numerous schools are provided for natives by the various Missions.

CURRENCY, BANKING, &c.

With the imposition of Customs Duties in 1913, British gold and silver, that had hitherto formed the bulk of the coin in circulation in the Group, began to grow scarce and to be replaced by French. The disappearance was gradual but sure, and at the present time gold is never seen, and silver but rarely in the town. In some of the islands, however, a certain quantity of shillings and florins remain in circulation, as the natives positively refuse to accept French paper in payment of their produce, and, it may be added, show no especial liking for British. The disappearance of British coin was followed at no long interval by that of French silver (French gold has always been unknown in the Group) and small change ; but whereas French paper remained, British bank notes seemed to disappear as soon as they left the payers' hands. What has been the fate of the British and French coin that was in the Group can only be conjectured ; all the French, and the bulk of the British, has probably been exported ; and natives are known to have a certain quantity of British coin—both gold and silver—still in their possession. It is possible that they have even larger amounts than is suspected to which they are adding periodically what they receive in payment for their produce, and of which but little ever appears to get into circulation again. A Joint Regulation was issued during the year prohibiting the export of coin. The Group had already been drained ; but it is hoped it may have the effect of keeping within its limits such quantities at least as may be imported in the future.

The dearth of small change resulting from the conditions referred to above has, of course, caused great inconvenience to the commercial world and to the public in general. As a consequence various substitutes, chief among them being postage stamps, came into unofficial circulation. Towards the close of the year a small quantity of new French nickel coinage came into the Group, and it is hoped that by means of gradually increasing supplies of this medium the substitutes adopted may be driven out of circulation.

IMPORTS.

The total imports for 1920 were valued at £159,174. I regret that I am unable to furnish details of the quantities and values of the different articles imported into the Group. The staff of the Customs Office is too limited in number, and the members have to spend too much time absent from headquarters to admit of their keeping very elaborate books. The principal items are, however, wearing apparel, preserved meats, manufactures of metal, rice, wines, spirits and beer, tobacco, piece goods, biscuits, and flour. The country of origin in respect of probably eighty per cent. of the goods has been Great Britain, as, for reasons connected with the scarcity of shipping, Australia has, since 1915, become the supply depôt for both New Caledonia and the New Hebrides. A certain quantity was probably of Japanese and American origin; cotton goods and matches of very inferior quality from Japan; and wines, canned fruits, &c., from the United States (California). Matches were also imported from Holland, Norway, and Sweden; sugar from the Dutch East Indies; and rice from Burmah and French Indo-China. All passed through Australia, which, for our purpose, is regarded as the country of origin.

Prior to 1914, New Caledonia and the French houses of business in the New Hebrides drew their supplies from France, New Caledonia being then served by a monthly steamer of the Messageries Maritimes Line from Marseilles, consignments for the New Hebrides being transhipped at Nouméa to a smaller vessel of the same Line which worked between Sydney and Vila, via Nouméa, in connection with the Marseilles-Nouméa boat. In 1915 the monthly service from Marseilles to Nouméa was, however, discontinued, and by its discontinuance the regular supplies from France were cut off, New Caledonia and the French of the New Hebrides having thenceforth to rely upon Australia. The direct communication that New Caledonia now has with France is by means of one vessel, also of the Messageries Maritimes Line, which is loaded at Marseilles towards the end of each year and despatched to Nouméa, returning with accumulations of New Hebrides and New Caledonian produce.

The valuation of the imports is merely an estimate. The invoices of a large proportion of the goods necessarily show the values in French currency, and in view of the continually varying rate of exchange it is obviously almost impossible to fix the correct equivalent in sterling. The same remark applies to the valuations of the exports from the Group.

EXPORTS.

Detailed Statement showing quantities and value of articles exported during 1920.

	Tons.	£
Copra	3,002	105,070
Cotton	2,345	75,040
Cocoa	329	28,623
Coffee	297	17,820
Maize	672	7,392
Sandalwood	79	2,528
Wool	33	990
Miscellaneous	270	7,724
Total		245,187

Copra heads the list in point of quantity and value, the next in importance being cotton. The bulk of the copra was shipped to the United States. Cotton naturally went to Europe, as did coffee. A certain quantity of cocoa was taken by Australia, where it is hoped the demand for this article will increase; indeed in time it is not impossible that a market for the whole of the New Hebrides will be found in Australia. Such of the cocoa exported that was not consigned to Sydney was shipped through to Europe. Maize was mostly shipped for Australian consumption, whilst sandal wood and trochus were taken by China and Japan.

Unfortunately towards the end of the year under report, the general depression of trade was noticeable in the demand for most of our products; all prices fell considerably; in fact for some articles the demand appears to have entirely ceased. The prospect therefore for the current year is far from encouraging.

SHIPPING.

Thirteen British vessels, total net tonnage 5407, and 29 French vessels (including one sailing ship), total net tonnage 9,837 entered during 1920.

The British steam vessels entered and cleared from Vila during the year were the subsidised mail steamer (Burns, Philp Line); the Melanesian Mission Yacht; and three others. The French were the subsidised mail steamer (Messageries Maritimes Line); two vessels belonging to firms trading in the Group, and small vessels from Nouméa, New Caledonia.

PRODUCTION AND NATURAL RESOURCES.

Maize is cultivated by both British and French; coffee and cocoa almost entirely by French, and cotton by British and French and natives. If the present "slump" in the prices of produce continues the natives will probably abandon cotton cultivation as suddenly as they took it up. The production of maize during the year was about 700 tons, of coffee 300 tons, of cocoa 330 tons.

Although sugar-cane grows well in a semi-wild state it is a curious fact that its cultivation appears never to have been taken up in this Group. The climatic conditions would also appear to be favourable for tea.

Bananas were some fifteen years ago produced in large quantities, and shipped to Australia. The cultivation appears to have been abandoned as facilities for shipping ceased to be available.

Wool and hides were produced to the value of about £1,000 each. Fishing for trochas shell is carried on by Japanese. Edible fish are also caught, but not as a regular industry.

Sulphur deposits are said to exist in the Banks Islands. It is doubtful, however, if the "mines" could be worked at a profit.

WAGES AND COST OF LIVING.

The following table gives the more important average retail prices of the year. The tendency at the end of the year was upward.

	£	s.	d.
Wheaten Flour .. .. per bag 150-lb.	3	2	0
Wheat .. .. per Imperial bushel			
Wheaten Bread .. .. per lb.			4¾
Horned Cattle	7	0	0
Horses	12	0	0
Sheep	1	6	0
Goats		10	0
Swine .. .. per lb. live weight			6½
Milk .. .. per quart			6
Butter, Fresh .. .. per lb.		4	3
,, Tinned .. .. ,, ,,		4	6
Cheese .. .. ,, ,,		2	0
Eggs .. .. per dozen		5	0

continued—		£	s.	d.
Beef	.. per lb.			4
Mutton	.. ,, ,,		1	9½
Pork, Bacon	.. ,, ,,		3	6
Rice	.. ,, ,,			6½
Coffee	.. ,, ,,		1	2
Cocoa	.. ,, ,,		1	5
Tea	.. ,, ,,		3	6
Sugar	.. ,, ,,			10
Salt	Table, per 1½-lb jar		1	1½
Wine	Ordinaire, per bottle		1	10
Brandy	.. Three Star ,, ,,		15	0
Beer	.. ,, ,,		1	6
Tobacco	per lb., Capstan		10	0
Kerosine Oil	.. per case	1	9	0
Soap, Common	.. per lb.			9

Note.—Exchange is calculated at an average of 50 francs to the £ sterling.

The usual wage of unskilled native labour at Vila was 6s. a day, but lower wages were prevalent in the Northern Islands. Native servants, male, £18; female, £12 a year. Native bullock drivers, £36; plantation hands, £14 8s. a year, with board, lodging and clothing. Unskilled white labour, 14s. a day.

HOSPITALS.

The John G. Paton Memorial Hospital is supported by Presbyterian Mission funds, and is aided by a grant of £250 per annum from Imperial funds. The daily average of patients in hospital during 1920 was 23.

There is another hospital in the town of Vila which is maintained by the French Government. It is under the charge of a Medical Officer of the French Colonial Army.

The Presbyterian Mission hospitals on the islands of Tanna, Wala, and Santo, are unfortunately closed from want of medical men to put in charge.

The French Government has it in contemplation to station a medical man at the Segond Channel, on the island of Santo. A small hospital is also to be built and equipped at that place.

The New Hebrides have happily, so far, been spared a visitation of pneumonic influenza.

POST AND TELEGRAPH.

A radiotelegraph station, worked by two operators, was opened at Vila in 1916. In 1920, six hundred and sixteen messages with a total of seventeen thousand, six hundred and

eighty-seven (17,687) words, were handled. The station has not been in full working order during the year, otherwise the traffic would have been considerably greater.

The estimated number of letters dealt with in 1920 was 34,800; of postcards 2,150; of parcels 1,775. Book packets, circulars, etc., weighed about 10,000 kilograms.

No postal or money order system exists.

M. KING,

Resident Commissioner.

British Residency,
Vila.
23rd May, 1921.

The following recent reports, etc., relating to His Majesty's Colonial Possessions have been issued, and may be obtained from the sources indicated on the title page :—

ANNUAL.

No.	*Colony, etc.*	*Year.*
1062	Mauritius	1919–1920
1063	St. Vincent	1919–1920
1064	Nigeria	April–December—1919
1065	Sierra Leone	,,
1066	Gold Coast	,,
1067	Jamaica	,,
1068	British Guiana	1919–1920
1069	Trinidad and Tobago	1919
1070	British Honduras	,,
1071	Hong Kong	,,
1072	Barbados	,,
1073	East Africa Protectorate	1919–1920
1074	Leeward Islands	1918–1919
1075	Nyasaland	1919–1920
1076	Falkland Islands	,,
1077	Bermuda	1919
1078	Grenada	1920
1079	Uganda	,,
1080	Fiji	1919–1920
1081	Gibraltar	1920
1082	Northern Territories of the Gold Coast	,,
1083	Bechuanaland	1919
1084	St. Helena	1920–1921
1085	Basutoland	1920
1086	Ceylon	1920–1921
1087	Barbados	1920
1088	Gilbert and Ellice Islands	1920–1921
1089	East Africa Protectorate	1919–1920
1090	Sierra Leone	,,
1091	Zanzibar	1920
1092	Caymen Islands	,,
1093	Cyprus	1918–1919
1094	St Vincent	1920
1095	Bahamas	,,
1096	Nyasaland	1920–1921
1097	Weihaiwei	1920
1098	Nigeria	,,

MISCELLANEOUS.

No.	*Colony, etc.*	*Subject.*
82	Imperial Institute	Rubber and Gutta-percha.
83	Southern Nigeria	Mineral Survey, 1910.
84	West Indies	Preservation of Ancient Monuments, etc.
85	Southern Nigeria	Mineral Survey, 1911.
86	Southern Nigeria	Mineral Survey, 1912.
87	Ceylon	Mineral Survey.
88	Imperial Institute	Oil-seeds, Oils, etc.
89	Southern Nigeria	Mineral Survey, 1913.
90	St. Vincent	Roads and Land Settlement.
91	East Africa Protectorate	Geology and Geography of the northern part of the Protectorate.
92	Colonies—General	Fishes of the Colonies.

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(For Report for 1920 see No. 1099.)

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The British and French Resident Commissioners are subordinate to the High Commissioner for the Western Pacific and the High Commissioner at Nouméa, respectively.

REVENUE AND EXPENDITURE.

Comparative Yearly Statement of the Revenue.

	1921. £	s.	d.	1922. £	s.	d.
Condominium Revenue :—						
Post Office	1,711	0	0	863	0	0
Port Dues	416	0	0	450	0	0
Import Duties	16,724	0	0	16,758	0	0
Export Duties	5,839	0	0	6,935	0	0
Radiotelegraph	714	0	0	768	0	0
Miscellaneous	488	0	0	300	0	0
Total Condominium Revenue	£25,892	0	0	26,074	0	0

	1921–1922 £	s.	d.	1922–1923 £	s.	d.
British Revenue :—						
Fines, Fees, Licences, etc.	153	0	0	133	0	0
Interest on Furniture	10	0	0	10	0	0
Rents	43	0	0	43	0	0
Income Duty	356	0	0	372	0	0
Miscellaneous	—			11	0	0
Total British Revenue	£562	0	0	569	0	0

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In connection with the foregoing figures of Condominium Revenue attention is invited to the remarks regarding conversions that are contained in the report for the year 1920 (page 3). The same should be noted as regards the statement ot Condominium Expenditure.

Since 1920 additional Export Taxes (Condominium) have been imposed, viz., 8*s*. (10 frs.) per ton on cocoa, 16*s*. (20 frs.) per ton on unginned cotton, and £2 16*s*. (70 frs.) per ton on ginned cotton. Also the Export Duty on copra has been increased to 16*s*. (20 frs.) per ton.

Almost 60 per cent. of the Condominium Revenue is derived from Import Duties. The general rate is 5 per cent. *ad valorem*, with specific duties on wines, spirits, beer, tobacco, and ten other items. There is a generous list of exemptions.

Comparative Yearly Statement of Expenditure.

	1921.			1922.		
Condominium Expenditure :—	£	*s.*	*d.*	£	*s.*	*d.*
Joint Court	2,249	0	0	2,840	0	0
Constabulary	2,030	0	0	749	0	0
Post Office and Treasury	1,350	0	0	1,204	0	0
Public Works (Annual)	4,358	0	0	3,153	0	0
Port and Harbour	97	0	0	263	0	0
Public Works (Extraordinary) ..	984	0	0	—		
Island Services	1,085	0	0	1,122	0	0
Medical	152	0	0	249	0	0
Customs	893	0	0	820	0	0
Telegraph and Telephones	2,358	0	0	2,604	0	0
Miscellaneous	679	0	0	1,452	0	0
Total Condominium Expenditure ..	£16,535	0	0	14,456	0	0

Services entirely British:—	1921–1922				1922–1923		
	£	*s.*	*d.*		£	*s.*	*d.*
Establishments	2,187	0	0		3,736	0	0
Travelling :	£			£			
Government Yacht	5,138			6,176			
Boat s Crew ..	350			367			
	5,488	0	0		6,543	0	0
Medical	250	0	0		250	0	0
Prison	66	0	0		91	0	0
Constabulary	—				1,223	0	0
Incidentals	694	0	0		511	0	0
Total Expenditure on Services entirely British.	£8,685	0	0		12,354	0	0

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In 1922 the charges for Constabulary and the personal emoluments of Government Agents (Island Services) were, in accordance with the provisions of the Anglo-French Protocol of 1914 (Article 5), transferred to National Account.

POPULATION.

No change of importance has occurred in the situation as regards the non-native population of the Group since the date of the last report; the respective numbers remaining practically unchanged. Of the British settlers, five died in 1921 and one in 1922; of births there were four in each of these years.

Much has been written about the decrease of the native populations of Polynesian and Melanesian islands, but, although the fact cannot be disputed, it seems probable that, so far as the New Hebrides are concerned, the process is not so rapid as some contend. It began long ago, possibly as the result of the advent of the "white man," possibly before that time. Whatever the cause, it seems to have been most marked when mission observers appeared on the scene. Writing nearly fifty years ago (1880) the Reverend Dr. R. Steel observed: "They (the islands) are rapidly decreasing in population. Internecine wars destroy many; intermarrying in the same tribe destroys fecundity." Again, "diarrhœa and dysentery are almost periodic." To the causes assigned by Dr. Steel may be added the persistent recruiting to which the Group was subjected until the earlier years of the present century. This has now ceased, so, also, it may be confidently assumed, have internecine wars in the sense of Dr. Steel's remarks. The other three contributory causes of the diminution, viz., intermarriage, infanticide, and disease, certainly remain, but the reduction of the evil elements from five to three cannot but have had its effect. Figures are available regarding some of the southern islands that would show that the diminishing process is slower than in the last century. For instance, the population of Aneityum is stated to have been 3,513 in 1859, 1,482 in 1874, and 1,279 in 1878, a rate of decrease which, if maintained, would have entailed the entire depopulation of the island early in the present century. In 1910, however, the island still counted nearly 400 native inhabitants, and the present number is, it is thought, little below that figure. In 1859, the native population of Erromanga is stated to have been about 5,000; in 1878 the number was estimated at 1,000, and in 1910 at 800. Aniwa, a small island to the north-east of Tanna, had, in 1874, a population of 192; in 1910 the number was 140. The population of Tanna is said to have been 15,000 in 1859. In 1873 Captain Markham gave it as 8,000, a decrease of nearly one-half in fourteen years, whereas at the present time the number is believed to be little less than in the last-mentioned year. Unfortunately, reliable statistics in respect of the last century are not available as regards the northern islands: could they be obtained, they would doubtless give the same results as set forth above.

CURRENCY, BANKING, &c.

Since the date of the last report the situation as regards currency in circulation has grown easier. English silver has reappeared from its hiding places and it is even said that some business houses are at a loss to find a means to dispose of their accumulations, the road to export being for the present closed. Should this continue, the Condominium Government will doubtless feel justified in relaxing the restrictions on the exportation of silver coin, as was recently done in respect of gold.

French currency shows no signs of reaching its normal value. The rates of exchange in 1921 (fcs. = £ stg.) varied from 45·80 to 56·90, giving an average for the year of 49·74. In 1922, the range was from 47·95 to 76·50, the average being 56·98.

There are no banks or agencies of banks in the New Hebrides, and their absence is much felt.

IMPORTS.

Goods to the approximate value of £133,177 (Fcs. 5,378,705) were imported during 1921, and of £111,341 (Fcs. 4,562,473) in 1922. The British shares of these totals were, in 1921, £51,199, and in 1922, £55,751, or about 39 and 50 per cent. respectively. The decrease in the values as compared with 1920 is not due to any reduction in the requirements of the Group, but to the fall in prices—a very small proportion of which was passed on to the consumer—and, chiefly, to the resumption of direct communication between France and New Caledonia, from which the New Hebrides, that is the French portion, benefits equally with the neighbouring colony, as the merchant is now relieved from the necessity of procuring his supplies in the expensive markets of Australia and the United States. The bulk of the import trade is consequently diverted from Australia to France, via Nouméa, though certain classes of goods must, of course, continue to be supplied from the nearest depot.

The value of Australian exports to the New Hebrides in 1921 was, according to the report of the Commonwealth Bureau of Commerce and Industry, £108,000.

EXPORTS.

As anticipated in the report for the year 1920, the value of the export trade fell off considerably in 1921, the decrease being equal to over 60 per cent. In 1922 there was, however, a distinct recovery both in quantities and values, and, although in regard to the latter the figures of 1920 were not reached, the result may be regarded as encouraging. A steady increase in the shipments of copra will be noticed; of these, in 1921 nearly 50 per cent.

and in 1922 about 40 per cent. were on British account, the consignments being chiefly to the United States (San Francisco). Of the other articles of produce exported, amounting in 1921 to about 3,000 tons, of a value of nearly £62,000, and in 1922 to about 4,000 tons, valued at approximately £102,000, practically the whole were on French account.

The British share of the exports of the two years was, in 1921, about 30 per cent, and, in 1922, about 22 per cent.

The following statement shows the quantities and values of the produce exported during the period under report :—

	1921.		1922.	
	Quantities.	Values.	Quantities.	Values.
	Tons.	£	Tons.	£
Copra	5,353	90,601	5,717	85,755
Cotton	1,052	10,520	1,825	31,025
Cocoa	772	30,860	1,076	43,040
Coffee	237	7,113	349	13,960
Maize	513	3,077	209	1,674
Sandalwood ..	39	1,183	38	1,130
Wool	26	5,200	26	5,200
Miscellaneous ..	344	3,846	254	5,880
Total Values ..		£152,400		£187,664

SHIPPING.

The entries and clearances at and from Vila in 1921 were :—

Entered.	*Tonnage.*	*Cleared.*	*Tonnage.*
12 British	5,290	10 British	5,747
4 American (Br. Charter).	1,575	4 American (Br. Charter).	1,575
34 French	14,080	24 French	13,310
Total ..	20,945	Total ..	20,632

in 1922 :—

Entered.	*Tonnage.*	*Cleared.*	*Tonnage.*
16 British	8,364	15 British	8,103
2 Foreign (Br. Charter).	4,046	2 Foreign (Br. Charter).	4,046
29 French	12,274	25 French	12,851
Total ..	24,684	Total ..	25,000

Of ships-of-war, in 1921 the French sloop "Aldebaran," *T.*1,250, Commander Giraud, visited the Group in the month of May, and H.M.A.S. "Melbourne," *T.*5,400, flying the flag of the late Rear-Admiral J. S. Dumaresq, C.B., C.V.O., in September. In 1922, H.M.A.S. "Sydney," *T.*5,400, Captain H. S. Cayley, came in the month of June, and H.M.S. "Chatham," *T.*5,400, flying the flag of Commodore A. G. Hotham, C.M.G., commanding the New Zealand station, in October. The "Aldebaran," Commander de Solimignac, made three calls in 1922, viz., in April, May, and December.

British trade is handicapped by the lack of means of communication and transport under the British flag. While the French have, in addition to the monthly steamer of the Messageries line, two small steamers continually plying in the Group which handle import and export business of all kinds, and occasional vessels from New Caledonia, the British have only the subsidised steamer which leaves Sydney at intervals of five weeks and touches at but four places in the Group, and an auxiliary schooner that does the inter-insular work. Thus served, many British stations are only visited at intervals of from three to four months. It is true that, the number of British settlers being so much smaller than the French, they could not reasonably expect the same amount of service, but the volume of British import and export trade would certainly appear to entitle them to better consideration than they get.

PRODUCTION AND NATURAL RESOURCES.

The estimated yield of the principal articles of produce was as follows :—

	1921.	1922.
	Tons.	*Tons.*
Copra	6,000	6,500
Cotton	1,150	2,000
Maize	600	300
Cocoa	260	1,100
Coffee	200	380
Wool	26	26

The increases in cotton and cocoa in 1922 were doubtless due to extended cultivation consequent on the improved markets for the articles which prevailed at the end of 1921.

The areas under cultivation of the principal products have been estimated at nearly 74,000 acres, of which slightly more than 50 per cent. were French. The distribution of the crops was as follows :—

	British.	French.	Total.
	Acres.	*Acres.*	*Acres.*
Coconuts	35,000	22,795	57,795
Cocoa	300	6,597	6,897
Cotton	700	4,337	5,037
Coffee	—	2,879	2,879
Maize	100	1,174	1,274
	36,100	37,782	73,882

It will be noted that the British coconut plantations had the largest area, but that the French were easily first in respect of other crops.

The number of indentured labourers employed in 1922 in agricultural and other work was 3,158 (858 by British, and 2,300 by French settlers). Several hundred short-time labourers were also employed during the seasons for cotton-picking and similar work.

HOSPITALS.

The New Hebrides (Condominium) Administration possesses no medical service, consequently no government hospitals. There are, however, two of these institutions in the town of Vila which exist under the conditions stated in the report for 1920 (page 10). The number of patients treated in the British Hospital was, in 1921, 548 (Europeans 43, natives 505), and in 1922, 483 (Europeans 33, natives 450), the daily average of inpatients in each year being five. For the French institution the figures were in 1921, 825 (Europeans 160, natives 665), and in 1922, 820 (Europeans 188, natives 632).

In 1921 the French Government appointed a medical officer to the charge of the French settlement in the Canal de Segond, on the island of Santo. A small hospital has been built and equipped, also at French Government expense. The Condominium Government has granted an allowance to the Medical Officer for the treatment of non-indentured natives, and also bears the cost of drugs, etc., expended on such treatment.

Of the hospitals formerly maintained by the Presbyterian Mission, it is understood that the Tanna hospital will shortly be reopened ; and that it is in contemplation to replace the Ambrym institution, which was destroyed in the volcanic eruption of 1913, by one to be built on some part of Malekula.

No epidemics have broken out in the Group during the period under report ; but large numbers of natives are said to have been carried off by dysentery, influenza, and pulmonary complaints. As to the extent of the ravages of disease, no opinion is offered, as it is extremely difficult to obtain accurate statistics in regard to these matters.

A memorandum by Dr. G. Vernon Davies, D.S.O., Medical Superintendent of the British Hospital in Vila, on the subject of disease in the Group in 1922, is appended.

WAGES AND COST OF LIVING.

The average of the prices of the principal articles of domestic comsumption (flour, rice, sugar, tea, butter, etc.) showed a reduction in the years 1921 and 1922 on the figures given in the report for 1920 (page 9). At the time of writing the fall in the price of flour, for instance, has been as much as 45 per cent. ; of sugar, 48 per cent. ; of rice, 60 per cent., but of the other

articles, although there are reductions, they are not so pronounced. All prices are, however, still much higher than pre-war figures. They are much affected by the variations in the exchange (fcs. = £ stg.).

Wages are still increasing, especially those of native day-labour.

POST AND TELEGRAPH.

Post.—The numbers of letter packets, postcards, and parcels despatched outwards were: in 1921, 28,484, 780 and 74 respectively, and in 1922, 32,420, 1,210 and 80. Inwards, the number of letter packets in 1921 was 6,082, and in 1922, 7,210.

The estimated weight of book packets, circulars, etc., was kilos 10,000 in each year.

Questions of exchange have prevented the adoption of the money order system, and of parcel post generally, though a few parcels are sent through the post, but to France only.

Radiotelegraph.—The result of the two years working for the Vila station showed for 1921, 796 messages transmitted, and 1,116 received; and in 1922, 946 transmitted and 1,039 received. Of the messages sent, 209 in 1921 were on Government account, and of those received, 252. In 1922 the figures were 436 and 312 respectively. The cost of the station was, in 1921, £714, and in 1922, £768.

Telephones.—A public telephone service with two exchanges is working in Vila and the neighbourhood, the number of subscribers being 29. There are private lines on the island of Aneityum (9 miles) and in the Canal de Segond, island of Santo (about 4 miles).

M. KING,
Resident Commissioner

British Residency,
Vila.
6th April, 1923.

APPENDIX.

DISEASES IN THE NEW HEBRIDES, 1922.

The following diseases are endemic here:—tuberculosis, malaria, filariasis, amœbiasis, yaws. These five are, with pneumonia, to which the native is very subject, the chief causes of sickness in the Group. The following have appeared in epidemic form either in 1921 or 1922:—cerebro-spinal fever, influenza, whooping cough, mumps. The Group appears to be free from enteric, plague, cholera, smallpox, yellow fever, bacillary dysentery, diphtheria.

Tuberculosis.—This is the most serious disease that the natives are infected with. It accounts for one-third of all deaths that occur in this hospital, and from what one sees in visiting other islands it is the greatest cause of ill-health and death in the Group. Besides the pulmonary disease, which is the most common, inflammation of the cervical glands is often met with. These show a tendency to very early suppuration. Tubercular joints and meningitis also occur commonly, many of the former being seen in the districts which are not near medical attention. This disease is probably the most difficult of all to deal with, as the living habits of the natives, with a large family living and sleeping in a one-roomed grass house, provides an ideal means of spreading the infection.

Malaria.—This is the most widespread disease here. Judging by the size of spleen in the native babies few of these escape. All natives are subject to it throughout their lives, but the value of quinine is becoming more recognised throughout the native population, and it is now in demand by all who have seen its good results.

Among non-natives malaria is the greatest cause of ill-health, the majority of Europeans suffering from it at intervals. It is still very common in Vila, the capital, and one looks forward to the time when something can be done there in the way of anti-mosquito measures.

Blackwater fever occurs among Europeans in some islands, notably Epi.

Filariasis.—This is distributed throughout the whole Group, but the incidence in the population varies very much in different parts. In some villages on Malekula between one-third and one-half of the people are suffering from elephantiasis. On other islands one does not see a case of this complication. Muscular swellings, many of which go on to abscess formation, occur very frequently among the natives and are an important source of ill-health and incapacity. These are probably of filarial origin, though this is one of the things requiring investigation. One or two cases of filaria have occurred among the white population.

Amœbiasis.—This remains endemic throughout the year, but shows a distinct tendency to be epidemic in January and February, when flies appear at their worst. It is distributed throughout the whole Group, and is an important cause of death in all the villages one has seen, attacking and proving fatal in all ages down to infancy. However, the village people are recognising the good results that can be obtained with emetine, and it is usually one of the diseases that they will come to the hospital for when they are within reach of attention.

Among non-natives it is probably the most common tropical disease, apart from malaria, that is met with. Both among Europeans and natives it occurs in Vila.

Yaws.—It is difficult to estimate the extent to which this disease exists among the native population. Few babies seem to escape, and sequelæ are seen in several forms among the adults. It must form a large part in the causation of chronic ill-health. Gangosa is very often seen.

There is a form of periostitis that is very common here. It seems to be described as a complication of yaws, but has occurred in Europeans after several years residence here who have had no sign of the primary disease. The tibia is the bone most often affected, but almost any bone seems subject to it, especially those forming the elbow joint. The neosalvarsan drugs which are so efficacious in the other manifestations of yaws seem to have little influence on it, but it responds to potassium iodide. This bone-lesion occurs in about 10 per cent. of the people in some villages.

Besides the diseases mentioned above there are others which do not occur so frequently. Tetanus appears from time to time. Leprosy is scattered about the Group, and probably none of the larger islands are without it. So far these cases have not been isolated or treated, except on one island.

Venereal Diseases.—Syphilis appears to be very uncommon, and I have not seen one case to diagnose clinically. Gonorrhoea is becoming increasingly common, especially among the labour in Vila. Unfortunately, in this way it is being carried back to the other islands.

Ulcerating granuloma is also met with in the Group.

Skin Disease.—Tropical ulcer is very common. This and scabies are probably the only two skin complaints that interfere with the efficiency of the native.

Hookworm.—This has never been investigated in the Group, and if this were done probably, as in other islands, a large percentage of the natives would be found affected. It was hoped

that last year a representative of the Rockefeller Foundation would come to the Group for this purpose, but so far he has evidently been unable to come.

The above notes are based on clinical grounds only, as so far little has been done here in the way of investigating disease, and one searches the books on Tropical Medicine in vain for any reference to the New Hebrides. It is to be hoped that before long the fact that these islands still being virgin soil pathologically will attract a small laboratory.

VERNON DAVIES, M.D. (Melb.).

Paton Memorial Hospital,
Vila.

7th March, 1923.

Colonial Reports, Etc.

The following recent reports, etc., relating to His Majesty's Colonial Possessions have been issued, and may be obtained from the sources indicated on the title page:—

ANNUAL.

No.	*Colony, etc.*	*Year.*
1123	British Guiana	1921
1124	Grenada	,,
1125	Zanzibar	,,
1126	Northern Territories of the Gold Coast	,,
1127	Gibraltar	,,
1128	St. Vincent	,,
1129	St. Helena	,,
1130	Fiji	,,
1131	Basutoland	1921–1922
1132	Bermuda	1921
1133	Bechuanaland Protectorate	1921–1922
1134	Barbados	,,
1135	Trinidad and Tobago	1921
1136	British Honduras	,,
1137	Ceylon	,,
1138	Swaziland	,,
1139	Hongkong	,,
1140	Straits Settlements	,,
1141	St Lucia	,,
1142	Ashanti	,,
1143	Jamaica	,,
1144	Falkland Islands	1920
1145	Bahamas	1921–1922
1146	Seychelles	1921
1147	Turks and Caicos Islands	,,
1148	British Solomon Islands Protectorate	1921–1922
1149	Mauritius	1921
1150	Sierra Leone	,,
1151	Uganda	,,
1152	Somaliland	,,
1153	Kenya Colony and Protectorate	April–Dec., ,,
1154	Gold Coast	,,
1155	Nigeria	1922
1156	Nyasaland	1921
1157	Falkland Islands	,,
1158	Weihaiwei	1922
1159	Cyprus	,,
1160	Gambia	,,

MISCELLANEOUS.

No.	*Colony, etc.*	*Subject.*
83	Southern Nigeria	Mineral Survey, 1910.
84	West Indies	Preservation of Ancient Monuments, etc.
85	Southern Nigeria	Mineral Survey, 1911.
86	Southern Nigeria	Mineral Survey, 1912.
87	Ceylon	Mineral Survey.
88	Imperial Institute	Oil-seeds, Oils, etc.
89	Southern Nigeria	Mineral Survey, 1913.
90	St. Vincent	Roads and Land Settlement.
91	East Africa Protectorate	Geology and Geography of the northern part of the Protectorate.
92	Colonies—General	Fishes of the Colonies.
93	Pitcairn Island	Visit to the Island by the High Commissioner for the Western Pacific.

Printed under the authority of H.M. Stationery Office by H.M.S.O. Press, Harrow.

COLONIAL REPORTS—ANNUAL.

No. 1216.

NEW HEBRIDES.

REPORT FOR 1923.

(For Report for 1921 and 1922 see No. 1161.)

LONDON:
PUBLISHED BY HIS MAJESTY'S STATIONERY OFFICE

To be purchased directly from H.M. STATIONERY OFFICE at the following addresses:
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No. 1216.

NEW HEBRIDES.

REPORT FOR 1923.

GENERAL.

The New Hebrides, to which are attached the Banks and Torres Islands, lie between the 12th and 20th degrees of south latitude, and the 165th and 170th degrees of east longitude, and have an area of about 5,700 square miles. The natives are Melanesians, but in places there is a mixture of Polynesian blood.

A joint Naval Commission was established in 1888 by agreement with France, to protect the lives and property of British and French subjects and to maintain order. By the Convention of 20th October, 1906, a Condominium was set up with a joint Court composed of British and French Judges and a neutral President; and an executive government consisting, for some purposes, of the British and French representatives in the Group acting in concert. For other purposes British and French nationals remain subject to the control only of their national authorities. The Convention of 20th October, 1906, has been superseded by a Convention of 6th August, 1914, which was ratified in March, 1922.

The British and French Resident Commissioners are subordinate to the High Commissioner for the Western Pacific and the High Commissioner at Nouméa, respectively.

On the whole the year 1923 may be said to have been fairly prosperous for the European settler in the New Hebrides. The yield of the different products was good, the foreign market was more active than in 1922, and prices towards the end of the year showed a considerable improvement. The fluctuations of the French exchange were, of course, an impediment to commercial operations, but to this the settler and produce merchant are now well accustomed, and are apparently less affected thereby than in previous years when the experience was new.

REVENUE AND EXPENDITURE.

Comparative Yearly Statement of the Revenue.

	1922.			1923.		
Condominium Revenue :—	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
Post Office	863	0	0	980	0	0
Port Dues	450	0	0	729	0	0
Joint Court	—			226	0	0
Import Duties	16,758	0	0	22,240	0	0
Export Duties	6,935	0	0	7,365	0	0
Radiotelegraph	768	0	0	825	0	0
Miscellaneous	300	0	0	401	0	0
Total Condominium Revenue	£26,074	0	0	32,766	0	0
				(Fcs. 864,650·00)		

British Revenue :—	1922–1923 £ s. d.	1923–1924 £ s. d.
Fines, Fees, Licences, etc.	133 0 0	73 0 0
Interest on Furniture	10 0 0	9 0 0
Rents	43 0 0	41 0 0
Income Duty	372 0 0	300 0 0
Miscellaneous	11 0 0	76 0 0
Total British Revenue	£569 0 0	499 0 0

With the exception of a small percentage (about 2⅞) paid in sterling, the Condominium revenue, as in former years, was received in francs. The total shown in that currency has been calculated, as regards the proportion so paid, at the conventional rate of Fcs. 25·00 to the pound sterling. On the expenditure side the payments in francs (about 84 per cent.) and those in sterling (about 16 per cent.) have been similarly treated.

The cash balance in hand on the 31st December, 1923, was Fcs. 816,188, of which a portion represented the calculated equivalent (Fcs. 193,150) of a sterling deposit (£2,586) at a bank in Sydney; the approximate sterling value of the whole being £10,800.

Comparative Yearly Statement of Expenditure.

Condominium Expenditure :—	1922. £ s. d.	1923. £ s. d.
Joint Court	2,840 0 0	7,617 0 0
Constabulary	749 0 0	—
Post Office and Treasury	1,204 0 0	1,247 0 0
Public Works (Annual)	3,153 0 0	4,586 0 0
Public Works (Extraordinary) ..	—	677 0 0
Port and Harbour	263 0 0	229 0 0
Island Services	1,122 0 0	274 0 0
Medical	249 0 0	246 0 0
Customs	820 0 0	894 0 0
Telegraph and Telephone	2,604 0 0	2,084 0 0
Lands	—	455 0 0
Miscellaneous	1,452 0 0	6,591 0 0
Total Condominium Expenditure ..	£14,456 0 0	24,900 0 0
		(Fcs. 479,650·00)

Services entirely British:—	£	1922–1923 £ s. d.	1923–1924 £ s. d.
Establishments		3,736 0 0	3,660 0 0
Travelling :			
Government Yacht	6,176		
Boat's Crew ..	367		
		6,543 0 0	6,483 0 0
Medical		250 0 0	250 0 0
Prison		91 0 0	275 0 0
Constabulary		1,223 0 0	917 0 0
Incidentals		511 0 0	669 0 0
Total Expenditure on Services entirely British.		£12,354 0 0	12,254 0 0

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POPULATION.

Non-Native Population.—There is little change to be recorded in the numbers and composition of the non-native population of the Group in 1923. Those under British jurisdiction show a small increase over the number given in the statement that accompanied the report for 1920, the total on the 31st December being 338. Those under the French flag in the same period numbered 1,841, of whom nearly one half were indentured Indo-Chinese and Javanese coolies who become automatically French *ressortissants* by the operation of Article 2(2) of the Protocol of 1914.

Five deaths and two births occurred among the British community during the year.

A statement is appended giving details of the non-native population for the period under report. From this it will be seen that those of French nationality have decreased in number since 1920, while the British show a slight increase :—

French—1920	.. .. ..	901
1923	.. ..	709
Decrease	.. ..	192
British—1920	.. ..	262
1923	.. ..	275
Increase	.. ..	13

NON-NATIVE POPULATION OF THE NEW HEBRIDES.
1923.

BRITISH.

Description.	Adult. Males.	Females and Children.	Totals.
British Subjects	126	149	275
Foreign Subjects under British Régime :—			
European (*a*)	18	10	28
Asiatic	34	—	34
Others	1	—	1
TOTALS	179	159	338

(*a*) Includes American.

FRENCH.

Description.	Adult Males.	Females and Children.	Totals.	Grand Total.
French Citizens	287	422	709	984
,, Protected ..	—	—	832(*b*)	832(*b*)
Foreign Subjects under French Régime :—				
European	—	—	36	64
Asiatic	—	—	164(*c*)	198(*c*)
Others	—	—	—	1
	287	422	1,741	2,079

(*b*) Indentured Labourers (Indo-Chinese). (*c*) Of these 50 are Indentured Labourers (Javanese).

Analysis :—Of pure European Descent ..	1,048
Of Asiatic Origin	1,031
Total	2,079

Native Population.—In my report for 1921 and 1922, I submitted some remarks on the subject of the native population with particular reference to the gradual decrease in its numbers, and the causes of such decrease. I cannot pretend to have made a close study of this subject, but I can at least claim that it has occupied my attention for many years. Accordingly I venture the opinion that, of the many reasons assigned for this decrease, those advanced by the late Dr. Rivers, than whom none was more competent to speak, are the most worthy of consideration.* Dr. Rivers lays especial emphasis on the psychological factor. He attributes the decline of the Melanesian population to this : "That the people have been deprived of nearly all that gives interest to their lives," and this loss of interest has been brought about by the "unintelligent and undiscriminating action (of Europeans) towards native institutions." I will not quote further, but would invite attention to the original essay in the work referred to. The lack of intelligence displayed by would-be civilizers in their action towards natives and native institutions, has often impressed itself upon me. The action of such people appears never to be guided by consideration of the effects, positive or negative, good or ill, of such institutions on the native mind or character. The fact that the natives take interest in, and derive pleasure from, such or such an institution seems sufficient to ensure its discouragement and ultimate suppression. To many

* *See "Essays on the depopulation of Melanesia,"* edited by W. H. R. Rivers, M.D., F.R.S., Cambridge University Press, 1922.

of these institutions the natives have been strongly attached, and the blank in their lives left by their discontinuance or suppression is one that cannot be filled.

In most of the islands of the New Hebrides there is a great disproportion between the numbers of the two sexes, the males in all cases prevailing. The figures that follow are those of a fairly accurate enumeration that was made not long since by the Rev. M. Frater, of the Presbyterian Mission, of the population of two of the larger islands, and of seven smaller ones. They reveal disproportions ranging from five to thirty per cent.

Island.	Males.	Females.	Excess of Males.
Ambrym	3,153	2,438	715
Epi	1,745	1,535	210
Paama	913	829	84
Nguna	267	229	38
Pele	54	48	6
Emau	136	129	7
Mataso	34	29	5
Makura	85	68	17
Emaie	121	101	20
	6,508	5,406	1,102

The general opinion for long was that this preponderance of males in northern islands is due chiefly to female infanticide, ill-treatment of female infants, the premature marriage of girls, and other preventible causes. Careful enquiry has, however, revealed the fact that while the influences cited have a powerful effect, there is another, and probably the chief one; and that is that the excess, as Mr. Frater writes, "begins at birth, and is determined by prenatal causes. The male largely out-number the female births, and through the operation of the other causes the disparity between the sexes becomes more marked in adolescence and adult life." This may also be one of the contributory causes of the general decline of the native population.

As opposed, however, to the experience of the northern islands, a census of the scanty native population of Efate and the adjacent small islands, also made, and very recently, by the Rev. M. Frater, revealed a distinct preponderance of females, but not to the same extent as noticed in the case of the males of the northern islands.

CURRENCY, BANKING, ETC.

There has been no lack of coin in circulation during the year. This coin is all British silver, in which nearly all transactions with natives are conducted, even by French business houses and traders.

The year opened with French currency at an exchange rate of Fcs. 67·85 to the pound sterling, and closed at Fcs. 82·20. The highest rate reached during the year was the January figure

above quoted, and the lowest, Fcs. 84·25 in August. The average for the year was Fcs. 75·76.

The prohibition of the export of silver coin is still maintained.

IMPORTS.

The value of goods of all kinds imported during 1923 showed a considerable increase on the two previous years if calculated in French currency, but a great falling off if computed in sterling, as the following figures will show :—

Value in	1921	1922	1923
French currency,	Fcs.5,378,705	4,562,473	6,641,721
British currency	£ 133,177	111,341	85,300

The differences are, of course, due to the continued fall in the value of the franc. Of the total for 1923, the value of the British imports is estimated at about £22,000 (Fcs. 1,664,972) and of the French at £63,300 (Fcs. 4,798,749). The sterling values are but approximate, the rate of exchange having varied so much during the year as to render it almost impossible to fix a standard for calculation for the whole of the period.

The great decrease in the value of the British share of the trade may be attributed to the causes referred to in the report for 1921–22. Direct communication with France has now been established by the Messageries Maritimes Steamship Navigation Co. by a line of steamers via the Panama Canal, leaving Marseilles at intervals of three months, and touching at the French Antilles, Tahiti, Wellington (New Zealand), Nouméa (New Caledonia), Vila (New Hebrides), and if cargoes offer, at Suva (Fiji) and Apia (Samoa). By these vessels all the requirements of the French houses of business (with the exception of flour, sugar, etc.) are supplied, and their trade with Australia has, consequently, fallen off considerably.

EXPORTS.

The quantities of the different articles of produce exported during 1923, with the exception of copra, the shipments of which were increased by more than six hundred tons, were about the same as in 1922, but the total value showed an advance of more than 16 per cent., due to better prices and a more active market. The bulk of the shipments was by the vessels of the new line, the establishment of which is referred to in the section (Imports) next preceding.

The quantities and values of the produce exported in the three years 1921, 1922 and 1923, were :—

	1921		1922		1923	
	Quantity.	Value.	Quantity.	Value.	Quantity.	Value.
	Tons.	£	Tons.	£	Tons.	£
Copra ..	5,353	90,601	5,717	85,755	6,302	113,428
Cotton ..	1,052	10,520	1,825	31,025	1,287	32,185
Cocoa ..	772	30,860	1,076	43,040	1,062	42,484
Coffee ..	237	7,113	349	13,960	366	14,666
Maize ..	513	3,077	209	1,674	247	1,977
Sandalwood	39	1,183	38	1,130	50	1,492
Wool ..	26	5,200	26	5,200	30	6,000
Miscellaneous	344	3,846	254	5,880	—	5,709
		£152,400		£187,664		£217,941

Of these in 1923, the British share of the value is estimated at £57,437, or about 27 per cent., and the French at £160,504. The bulk of the British exports was copra, which amounted to more than two-thirds of the total; the balance was made up of wool, valued at £6,000, and cocoa at £3,160. Copra also formed the most valuable portion of the French exports, its value amounting to more than 45 per cent. of the whole. Cotton and cocoa furnished another 40 per cent. of the produce shown in the statement above; miscellaneous being made up of trocas shell, hides, bêche-de-mer, fruits, etc.

SHIPPING.

The tonnage entered at and cleared from Vila in 1923 was slightly more than 75 per cent. in excess of the figures of 1921, and 50 per cent. more than those of 1922. The following are the details :—

		Entered Tonnage.		
		1923	1922	1921
20	British	14,745	8,364	5,290
26	French	22,304	12,274	14,080
1	American ..	229	4,046	1,575
47		37,278	24,684	20,945

		Cleared Tonnage.		
		1923	1922	1921
21	British	15,393	8,013	5,747
22	French	21,389	12,851	13,310
1	American ..	229	4,046	1,575
44		37,011	25,000	20,632

By the establishment of the Messageries Maritimes branch line of " cargo-mixte " steamers referred to in the section on Trade, the preponderance of French tonnage in the Group becomes more than ever marked.

The French sloop " Aldebaran " was the only ship-of-war that visited the Group in 1923.

PRODUCTION AND NATURAL RESOURCES.

Some of the produce of the Group gave an increased yield in 1923 over the preceding years of 1922 and 1921, some gave less, as the figures below will show :—

	1923.	1922.	1921.
	Tons.	*Tons.*	*Tons.*
Copra	7,000	6,500	6,000
Cotton ..	1,200	2,000	1,150
Cocoa ..	1,200	1,100	260
Coffee	400	380	200
Wool	30	26	26

The decrease of the yield of cotton was doubtless due to the damage done by storms in the latter part of the year.

The area of land under cotton and cocoa has increased since my last figures were obtained. Coffee and maize show no change. It is satisfactory to note that British settlers are now paying attention to cocoa.

Agricultural operations during the year have been to some extent hampered by a short supply of labour. This deficiency French settlers are in a fair way to remedy from outside sources by the introduction of Indo-Chinese coolies, and their intention is, should the result of this experiment be satisfactory, gradually to cease recruiting New Hebridean natives, and to rely entirely on the Tonkinese and Annamite. Up to the present more than 800 have been introduced, and another batch of some hundreds is said to be on its way from Haïphong. At the end of 1923 the number of indentured labourers in French employ exceeded 4,000, composed of :—

New Hebrideans	3,500
Indo-Chinese	832
Javanese	50
Total	4,382

The number in British employ at the same time was 804. Should French settlers cease recruiting natives of the Group, it may reasonably be expected that a larger number will become available for engagement by the British.

CRIMINAL STATISTICS.

The peace of the Group was much disturbed in July-August by the brutal murder by natives of a British settler named Clapcott. The victim resided at a somewhat isolated spot named Tassmaluum in the south of the island of Santo; and on 30th July his dead body, horribly mutilated, was found by a native. The murder appears to have been the outcome of a plot by a certain Ronovura and his disciples to exterminate the " white folk "; and Clapcott was the first victim. A large number of natives were more or less involved in the conspiracy; eighteen of the more active participants in the crime were arrested, and seventeen were brought to trial (one having died in the interim). Of these brought to trial six were condemned to death, six were sentenced to various terms of imprisonment for larceny of the goods of the murdered man, and five were acquitted. Of those condemned to death the sentences in three cases were subsequently commuted.

Other cases of serious crime were the murder of a woman by her husband on the island of Epi, and a case of homicide on Tanna. Among Europeans a charge was laid against a Frenchman of causing the death of a native in his employ. This case is now undergoing investigation.

HOSPITALS.

Little or no progress can be reported under this head. The Mission Hospital on Iririki (John G. Paton Memorial) continued its good work, as did the French Government Hospital in Vila. Unfortunately the departure of the medical officer in charge necessitated the suspension of active operations by the first named before the end of the year. During the months it was open the number of in-patients was 482, Europeans 17 and natives 465; and the out-patients numbered 902. At the French institution 870 in-patients were treated, viz., Europeans 154, and natives 716, and out-patients to the number of 1,965. The deaths in the British hospital numbered 33, 2 being Europeans and 31 natives; and in the French 42, 3 being Europeans and 39 natives.

At the French hospital in the Canal de Segond (Santo) many natives benefited from the care of the Condominium Medical Officer.

In the report for 1921 and 1922, under this head, reference was made to the probable reopening of the Mission Hospital on the island of Tanna. This duly occurred in the early part of the year, and much good work has been done by Dr. Williams, the medical officer in charge. It is to be regretted that the arrangement made by the Mission authorities was for a few months only, as the medical officer is, it is understood, now being withdrawn, and the hospital will again close its doors.

It may be remembered that a very complete hospital on the island of Ambrym was destroyed by the great volcanic eruption of 1913. The authorities of the Mission fund which supported this institution have, it is learnt, decided to replace the destroyed building by another to be erected on the east coast of the island of Malekula. This project, if carried out, will supply a long-felt want, the destruction of the Ambrym institution having left the northern part of the Group entirely unprovided in this respect.

It is possible that the Group may be visited in 1924 by a commission of investigation into *Ankylostomiasis* (hook-worm) under the auspices of the Rockefeller Foundation.

Influenza, fortunately not of the pneumonic type, and dysentery have claimed their usual toll of native victims. Various figures regarding the mortality have been given, but in the absence of confirmation, they are not quoted here. In regard to the general health, the following observations by Dr. J. Madeleine, the Condominium Medical Officer, will doubtless be of interest :—

> " Etat sanitaire en 1923 très satisfaisant. Le coefficient de mortalité est très diminué par rapport aux années précédentes. Les grandes causes du mortalité restent les mêmes : Paludisme, Dysenterie Bacillaire, Affections Pulmonaires, Grippe, etca.

" Les formes graves de paludisme, bilieux accès pernicieux, hemoglobinurie, sont en progressions principalement chez les Européens, mais les indigènes n'en s'en point exempts sauf en ce qui concerne l'hemoglobinurie dont je n'ai observé aucun cas chez les canaques néo-hébridais.

" Les centres de Mélé* et de Tagabé* sont plus frappés que Vila. La region de la Téouma* est également très impaludée.

" Chez les indigènes la tuberculose fait de progrès. Elle sévit avec une acuité particulièrement grave, et les cas de tuberculose fibreuse sont rarement observés, les sujets atteints succombant ordinairement avant que l'organisme n'ait eu le temps d'organiser sa défense naturelle.

" Aucune epidemie grave au cours de l'année."

WAGES AND COST OF LIVING.

There is little to report under this head. Native wages of all kinds continue to increase: ten shillings per diem, with food, has recently been demanded by stevedores' labourers. There has been a slight, but perceptible, fall in the prices of most commodities; but the decline is not steady, being too much influenced by the fluctuations in the comparative values of French and British currency. The cost of living has, therefore, not materially decreased.

Freights and fares by the steamship lines serving the Group are continually being raised. The present cost of a first class passage from Vila to Sidney (a seven days' journey), by Messageries Maritimes line, is £30, or at the rate of more than £4 5s. per diem. In 1921 the charge was £16.

METEOROLOGICAL OBSERVATIONS.

With the exception of a storm in the month of November which did some damage to native gardens in the islands of Aoba, Pentecost and Maewo, and to a few coconut plantations on the east of Santo, the Group was spared any great meteorological disturbance in 1923.

A statement is appended showing the rainfall at eight stations in the Group during the years 1919-23, and the mean of the three quinquennial periods between 1909 and the last-mentioned year. From these figures it will be noticed that the tendency is towards a decreased rainfall in the southern portion of the Group (Erromanga, Efate, Epi and Malekula) and to a gradual increase in respect of those to the north. The " record " for the Group was established at Port Paterson (Vanua Lava, Banks Islands) in 1922 with a total for the year of 208·66 inches.

* Settlements in the vicinity of Vila.

RAINFALL RETURN OF EIGHT STATIONS IN THE NEW HEBRIDES FOR EACH OF THE YEARS 1919–23 INCLUSIVE.

Year.	Dillon Bay (Erromanga). Lat.18.47.S Lng.166.58.E	Iririki (Efate). Lat.17.44.S Lng.168.18.E	Voambi (Epi). Lat.16.48.S Lng.168.14.E	Tisman Bay (Malekula). Lat.16.17.S Lng.167.40.E	Tangoa (S. Santo). Lat.15.35.S Lng.166.39.E	Hog Harbour (E. Santo). Lat.15.05.S Lng.167.67.E	St. Philip & St. James' Bay (E.Santo) Lat.15.0 .S Lng.166.52.E	Port Paterson, Vanua Lava (Banks Is.) Lat.13.50.S Lng.167.34.E	Year.
	Inches.	Inches.	Inches.	Inches.	Inches.	Inches.	Inches.	Inches.	
1919.. ..	56·04	73·76	100·06	61·04	83·74	105·98	82·86	159·79	1919
1920.. ..	66·08	61·16	84·31	62·89	88·40	102·67	96·57	147·41	1920
1921.. ..	69·56	102·46	127·06	—	101·14	151·58	140·50	193·01	1921
1922.. ..	63·95	65·08	—	—	114·34	136·60	130·66	208·66	1922
1923.. ..	64·32	69·79	—	—	108·77	137·09	141·74	157·86	1923
Mean Annual Rainfall ..	63·99	74·45	103·81	61·96	99·28	126·78	118·16	173·34	
Mean of 5 years 1914–18 ..	*74·34	76·99	117·66	72·75	94·48	119·97	105·49	150·31	1914–18
1909–13 ..	107·13	90·65	No record.	80·46	91·69	124·66	*113·56	*145·02	1909–13

* 4 Years only.

POST AND TELEGRAPH.

Post.—The volume of correspondence handled by the Post Office in 1923 showed an increase over that of 1922. From the United Kingdom and France the number of letters, books, packets, etc. received is estimated at 23,500, and from other places 28,000; the number despatched being 12,000 and 16,000 respectively.

Mail communication is maintained by vessels of the Burns, Philp line, subsidised by the Government of the Commonwealth of Australia, and by the Messageries Maritimes line subsidised by the French Government.

Radiotelegraph.—In 1923, 1,018 messages were despatched from the Vila Radio Station, and 1,158 received. Of those sent, 338 were on Government account, and of those received 274. The cost of the station was £2,074, and the receipts on account of traffic £824, of which £298 was payable to other stations as their share of coastal charges, etc.

The operating staff of the station numbered two, one British and one French.

M. KING,
Resident Commissioner.

British Residency,
Vila, New Hebrides.
18*th May*, 1924.

COLONIAL REPORTS, Etc.

The following recent reports, etc., relating to His Majesty's Colonial Possessions have been issued, and may be obtained from the sources indicated on the title page :—

ANNUAL.

No.	*Colony, etc.*	*Year.*
1182	Uganda	1922
1183	Federated Malay States	,,
1184	Unfederated Malay States	,,
1185	State of Brunei	,,
1186	Straits Settlements	,,
1187	Falkland Islands	,,
1188	Kenya Colony and Protectorate	,,
1189	British Solomon Islands Protectorate	1922–1923
1190	Jamaica	1922
1191	Seychelles	,,
1192	Bahamas	1922–1923
1193	Somaliland	1922
1194	Northern Territories of the Gold Coast	1922–1923
1195	Leeward Islands	,,
1196	Turks and Caicos Islands	1922
1197	Nigeria	1923
1198	Weihaiwei	,,
1199	Gilbert and Ellice Islands	1922–1923
1200	Ashanti	,,
1201	Gambia	1923
1202	Bahamas	1923–1924
1203	Hongkong	1922
1204	Nyasaland	1923
1205	Cayman Islands	1922
1206	Cyprus	1923
1207	Gold Coast	1922–1923
1208	Trinidad and Tobago	1923
1209	Zanzibar Protectorate	,,
1210	Bechuanaland Protectorate	1923–1924
1211	Swaziland	1923
1212	Basutoland	1923–1924
1213	Turks and Caicos Islands	1923
1214	Fiji	,,
1215	British Honduras	,,

MISCELLANEOUS.

No.	*Colony, etc.*	*Subject.*
83	Southern Nigeria	Mineral Survey, 1910.
84	West Indies	Preservation of Ancient Monuments, etc.
85	Southern Nigeria	Mineral Survey, 1911.
86	Southern Nigeria	Mineral Survey, 1912.
87	Ceylon	Mineral Survey.
88	Imperial Institute	Oil-seeds, Oils, etc.
89	Southern Nigeria	Mineral Survey, 1913.
90	St. Vincent	Roads and Land Settlement.
91	East Africa Protectorate	Geology and Geography of the northern part of the Protectorate.
92	Colonies—General	Fishes of the Colonies.
93	Pitcairn Island	Report on a visit to the Island by the High Commissioner for the Western Pacific.

Printed by H.M.S.O. Press, Harrow.

COLONIAL REPORTS—ANNUAL.

No. 1273.

NEW HEBRIDES.

REPORT FOR 1924.

For Report for 1921 and 1922, see No. 1161 (Price 6d.) and for Report for 1923 see No. 1216 (Price 6d.)

LONDON:
PRINTED AND PUBLISHED BY HIS MAJESTY'S STATIONERY OFFICE

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No. 1273.

NEW HEBRIDES.

REPORT FOR THE YEAR 1924.

General.

The New Hebrides, to which are attached the Banks and Torres Islands, lie between the 12th and 20th degrees of south latitude, and the 165th and 170th degrees of east longitude, and have an area of about 5,700 square miles. The natives are Melanesians, but in places there is a mixture of Polynesian blood.

A joint Naval Commission was established in 1888 by agreement with France, to protect the lives and property of British and French subjects and to maintain order. By the Convention of the 20th October, 1906, a Condominium was set up with a joint Court composed of British and French Judges and a neutral President; and an executive government consisting, for some purposes, of the British and French representatives in the Group acting in concert. For other purposes British and French nationals remain subject to the control only of their national authorities. The Convention of the 20th October, 1906, has been superseded by a Convention of the 6th August, 1914, which was ratified in March, 1922.

The British and French Resident Commissioners are subordinate to the High Commissioner for the Western Pacific and the High Commissioner at Nouméa respectively.

The year 1924 may be said to have been reasonably prosperous for the European settler in the Group. The yield of the different products inclined above the average, but no difficulty has been experienced in disposing of these products in the foreign markets and reasonable prices were obtained.

Revenue and Expenditure.

Condominium Revenue.

	1923.			1924.
	£	*s.*	*d.*	Francs.
Post Office	980	0	0	68,952·90
Port Dues	729	0	0	23,092·48
Joint Court	226	0	0	1,650·48
Import Duties	22,240	0	0	608,492·86
Export Duties	7,365	0	0	200,134·92
Radiotelegraph ..	825	0	0	23,443·28
Miscellaneous	401	0	0	18,958·16
Total Condominium Revenue	£32,766	0	0	Fcs. 944,725·08

British Revenue.

	1923–24. £	s.	d.	1924–25. £	s.	d.
Fines, Fees, Licences, etc...	73	0	0	76	0	0
Interest on Furniture ..	9	0	0	2	0	0
Rents	41	0	0	41	0	0
Income Duty	300	0	0	341	0	0
Miscellaneous	76	0	0	27	0	0
Total British Revenue ..	£499	0	0	£487	0	0

Condominium Expenditure.

	1923. £	s.	d.	1924. Fcs.
Joint Court	7,647	0	0	146,679·08
Constabulary	—	—	—	3,979·24
Post Office & Treasury	1,247	0	0	39,890·00
Public Works (Annual)	4,586	0	0	132,824·88
Public Works (Extraordinary)	677	0	0	85,364·42
Port and Harbour ..	229	0	0	7,915·92
Island Services ..	274	0	0	16,976·78
Medical	246	0	0	6,084·04
Customs	894	0	0	22,832·32
Telegraph & Telephone	2,084	0	0	82,081·64
Lands	455	0	0	60,733·70
Miscellaneous	6,591	0	0	81,389·86
Total Condominium Expenditure ..	£24,900	0	0	Fcs. 686,742·88

Services entirely British.

	1923–24. £	s.	d.	1924–25. £	s.	d.
Establishments ..	3,660	0	0	4,115	0	0
Travelling	6,483	0	0	5,357	0	0
[1924–25 :— Govt. Yacht £5,051 11 9 Boat's Crew 305 17 7]						
Medical	250	0	0	313	0	0
Prison	275	0	0	—	—	—
Constabulary	917	0	0	1,753	0	0
Incidentals	669	0	0	2,063	0	0
Total Expenditure on Services exclusively British	£12,254	0	0	£13,601	0	0

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Population.

Non-Native Population.

The number of non-native population under British jurisdiction shows a small decrease in comparison with that shown in the statement which accompanied the report for 1923, the total on the 31st December, 1924, being 296. Those under the French flag for the same period numbered 2,352, of whom nearly two-thirds were indentured Indo Chinese coolies, who automatically became French *ressortissants* by the operation of Article 2 (2) of the Protocol of 1914.

Six deaths and three births occurred among the British community during the year.

A statement is appended giving details of the non-native population for the period under report.

British.

Description.	*Adult Males.*	*Females and Children.*	*Totals.*
British Subjects	123	124	247
Foreign Subjects under British Regime :—			
European (*a*)	14	13	27
Asiatic	22	—	22
Totals	159	137	296

(*a*) Includes American.

French.

Description.	*Adult Males.*	*Females and Children.*	*Totals.*
French Citizens	290	451	741
French Protected	—	—	1,471 (*b*)
Foreign Subjects under French Regime :—			
European	—	—	9
Asiatic	—	—	131
Totals	290	451	2,352

(*b*) Indentured labourers (Indo-Chinese).

The total non-native population was thus 2,648, of whom 1,024 were of pure European descent and 1,624 were of Asiatic origin.

Native Population.

The question of the future of the native population remains, and must continue to remain for a long time, one of very great interest. It would appear that there have been so many causes contributing to the decrease in the indigenous population that it

is almost impossible to attribute this to any one particular cause.

A decrease has occurred in the native population of other Island Groups of the South Pacific, but it should be noted that in many of them, after a certain point has been reached, the decline has ceased and an upward movement taken place. This would appear to show that after the first ill-effects of coming into contact with Europeans and an entirely different type of civilisation the native inhabitants have adapted themselves to the new manner of living and once more regained interest in life, with beneficial results to themselves. For this, credit must be given to the education, medical treatment, etc., which they have received; and there seems no reason why a similar condition should not be brought about in the New Hebrides.

In the islands, the population of which have been brought into more direct control and received some education and medical assistance, such a result can already be seen. Tanna is a conspicuous example of this, a census taken in 1919 showing a population of 5,310, and another in 1924 of 5,871, or an increase of 561 in five years. Paama and Tongoa, in the central part of the Group, are also satisfactory examples of an increasing population; with an extended system of native administration, resulting in closer supervision over the native population, and an adequate scheme of medical organisation, there are strong grounds to hope that the decline among the people of the New Hebrides may also be gradually checked.

Currency, Banking, Etc.

The year opened with French currency at an exchange rate of Fcs. 84·95 to the pound sterling and closed at Fcs. 87·17. The highest rate reached during the year was Fcs. 119·17 and the lowest Fcs. 67·80. The average for the year was Fcs. 85·83.

There are no banking facilities in the Group; the majority of the French firms conduct their banking business with the Bank of Indo-China in Nouméa, New Caledonia.

Imports.

The value of goods of all kinds imported during 1924 showed a considerable increase on the previous year, as the following figures will show :—

Value in	1923.	1924.
French currency	6,641,721	7,929,327
British currency	£85,300	£92,201

Of the total for the year 1924 the value of the British imports is estimated at about Fcs. 1,679,824 (£19,532), and that of the French at Fcs. 6,249,503 (£72,668). The sterling values are only approximate, the rate of exchange having varied so much during the year as to make a standard of calculation for the whole period almost an impossibility.

The continual decrease in the value of the British share of the trade may be attributed to the causes referred to in previous reports, supplemented by the fact that British firms are now importing more goods from France by the direct line of Messageries Maritimes steamers to enable them to compete with the local prices of the French firms. Except for such imports as flour, sugar, etc., which are still obtained in Australia, trade with that country has considerably fallen off.

The Messageries Maritimes supplied a three-monthly direct service to France during the period under report, and are providing a two-monthly service in 1925. In consequence thereof the bulk of the produce of the Group, with the exception of cocoa, is shipped to Europe direct, instead of via Australia as hitherto.

Exports.

The quantities of the different articles of produce exported during 1924 showed a considerable improvement over 1923, and the total value showed an advance of nearly 17 per cent. The increase in value may be partially attributed to better prices being obtained than in the preceding year, with the exception of cocoa, which remained about the same. The increase in the quantity of the exports may in a great measure be attributed to the increased labour facilities on the French side by the introduction of Indo-Chinese.

A comparative statement of the quantities and values of the exports for 1923 and the year under report is appended. Of these, in 1924, the British share of the value is estimated at £65,540, or about 25 per cent., and the French share at £195,550.

The bulk of the British exports was copra, which amounted to more than two-thirds of the total. The balance was made up of wool, valued at £10,332, and cocoa, valued at £2,791. Copra also formed the most valuable portion of the French exports, its value amounting to nearly 35 per cent. of the whole. Cotton and cocoa furnished nearly another 40 per cent., miscellaneous being made up of shell, hides, fruits, bêche-de-mer, etc.

EXPORTS.—COMPARATIVE STATEMENT.

Article.	1923. *Tons.*	1923. *Value.* £	1924. *Tons.*	1924. *Value.* £
Copra	6,302	113,428	6,792	125,652
Cotton	1,287	32,185	1,420	46,068
Cocoa	1,062	42,484	1,517	60,716
Coffee	366	14,666	281	7,110
Maize	247	1,977	307	1,844
Sandlewood	50	1,492	84	1,038
Wool	30	6,000	33	10,805
Miscellaneous ..	—	5,709	347	7,857
Totals		£217,941		£261,090

Shipping.

The tonnage entered at and cleared from Vila in 1924 was 25 per cent. in excess of that in 1923 and nearly 90 per cent. more than in 1922. The following are the details :—

ENTERED TONNAGE.

	1924.	1923.
14 British	8,266	14,745
31 French	37,942	22,304
		229 (American)
45	46,208	37,278

CLEARED TONNAGE.

	1924.	1923.
14 British	8,266	15,393
29 French	38,892	21,389
		229 (American)
43	47,158	37,011

Owing to the establishment of the Messageries Maritimes line of steamers referred to elsewhere the preponderance of French tonnage becomes more marked, and is still likely to further increase.

H.M.A.S. "Brisbane" and H.M.A.S. "Marguerite" visited the Group in June and also the French sloop "Aldebaran."

Criminal Statistics.

In the islands of Santo and Malekula there have been several murders among the natives. These are the result of inter-tribal quarrels, which take the form of a continual vendetta. They are much to be regretted, but until district administration is more advanced it is not practicable to arrest the murderers. Endeavours are being made to get into communication gradually with the "Bush" tribes, so that Government control can be extended more by peaceful penetration than by visits of the armed constabulary.

There are no other cases of serious crime to report.

Hospitals.

The report under this head remains practically the same as for the preceding year. The Mission Hospital on Iririki continued to do good work, as did the French Government Hospital in Vila. The number of patients treated by the first named during the year was 735, of whom 47 were Europeans; the number treated by the French Government Hospital was 1,870,

of whom 206 were Europeans. The number of deaths in the British Hospital was 13, none being Europeans, and in the French Hospital 51, of whom 3 were Europeans.

The French Hospital in the Segond Channel (Santo), which is in charge of the Condominium Medical Officer, also did good work; but statistics of cases treated are not available.

In the report for 1923 reference was made to the probable reopening of the Mission Hospital on Tanna. It is a matter for satisfaction that this has now been definitely decided upon and a medical officer is expected to arrive early in 1925.

Arrangements have now been concluded for the Group to be visited during 1925 by the Commission of Investigation into Ankylostomiasis (hook-worm), referred to in last year's report. It is hoped that as a result of this visit and the opening of the Tanna Hospital a better knowledge of conditions will be obtained and that it will be possible for a more forward policy in the treatment of the native population to be adopted.

Production and Natural Resources.

The area of land under cotton has still further increased since the report for 1923 was written. Coffee and maize remain almost the same; the output of coffee has not been as good as usual. Since the commencement of the year under report more cotton has been "ginned" than hitherto. A large ginning plant is being erected in Vila by one of the business houses, and this should have a favourable influence on cotton growing. But all agricultural operations are hampered by lack of labour. In the report for 1923 it was anticipated that more labour would become available for the British planter owing to the fact that the French were gradually ceasing to recruit local labour and importing indentured labour from Indo-China. This, however, has not proved to be the case. Since that report 600 more Indo-Chinese under indenture have been imported by the French, and the number of such imported labourers is likely to increase. At the close of the year the French had in their employ 1,800 New Hebrideans, 1,421 Indo-Chinese, and 50 Javanese. The number of New Hebrideans in British employ for the same period was 804.

The position of the British planter is, owing to the lack of labour, a matter of very considerable concern.

Wages and Cost of Living.

The cost of living for the year under report has not decreased to any appreciable extent. Native wages are high, and 5s. per diem is an average wage paid for casual native labour. The price of nearly all commodities varies with the fluctuations in the value of the franc.

The average price of a few commodities of daily consumption has been as follows:—

Butter, 2s. 6d. per lb.
Bacon, 2s. 6d. to 3s. 6d. per lb.
Cheese, 2s. 6d. per lb.
Eggs, 2s. per dozen.
Imported tinned vegetables, etc., 2s. per tin.
Flour, 16s. 8d. per 50 lb. sack.
Tea, 3s. per lb.

Monthly wages for domestic servants vary from 25s. to 30s. for a female and 35s. to 40s. for a male, and all found.

Meteorological Observations.

No hurricanes visited the Group during the period under report. A gale occurred in the month of December, but no damage was done. The rainfall for the year was less than usual and there was an exceptionally dry period during the months of September, October and November.

A statement is appended showing the monthly rainfall for 1924 at four stations in the Group.

RAINFALL RETURN BY MONTHS OF FOUR STATIONS IN THE NEW HEBRIDES FOR 1924.

	Jan.	*Feb.*	*March.*	*April.*	*May.*	*June.*
Port Vila (Efate) ...	1·14	3·02	7·17	3·36	15·00	15·53
Big Bay (Santo) ...	11·83	5·36	44·83	7·26	18·53	15·14
Hog Harbour (East Santo)	16·51	12·62	14·88	4·80	21·69	16·33
Atchin (Malekula) ...	1·73	8·59	9·98	4·31	12·24	7·67
Totals	31·21	29·59	76·86	19·63	67·46	54·67
	July.	*Aug.*	*Sept.*	*Oct.*	*Nov.*	*Dec.*
Port Vila (Efate) ...	6·86	5·37	0·34	1·03	13·05	5·67
Big Bay (Santo) ...	2·25	2·73	6·64	6·73	6·99	14·18
Hog Harbour (East Santo)	4·67	6·36	5·59	12·41	11·05	8·87
Atchin (Malekula) ...	3·58	2·50	0·57	3·72	7·36	3·65
Totals	17·36	16·96	13·41	23·89	38·45	32·31

Mean Annual Rainfall 35·155.

Post and Telegraph.

POST.

The number of letters, books, packets, etc., handled by the Post Office in 1924 is estimated as follows:—

Received from the United Kingdom and Colonies and France and Colonies	32,030
Received from other places	4,625
Total	36,655
Despatched to United Kingdom and Colonies and France and Colonies	24,050
Despatched to other places	2,330
Total	26,380

Mail communication is maintained by vessels of the Burns Philp line, subsidised by the Government of the Commonwealth of Australia, and by the Messageries Maritimes line, subsidised by the French Government.

The inter-insular communication is maintained partially by four small steamers, the property of the business houses in the Group.

Radiotelegraph.

In 1924, 805 messages were despatched from the Vila Radio Station, and 1,036 received. Of those sent 228 were on Government account, and of those received 223. The cost of the station was Fcs. 71,086 (£826) and the receipts on account of traffic Fcs. 23,442 (£272), of which Fcs. 5,356 (£62) was payable to other stations as their share of coastal charges, etc.

The operating staff of the station numbered two, one British and one French.

G. B. SMITH-REWSE,
Resident Commissioner.

British Residency,
Vila, New Hebrides.
18*th July*, 1925.

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NEW HEBRIDES.

REPORT FOR 1925.

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No. 1334.

NEW HEBRIDES.

REPORT FOR THE YEAR 1925.

General.

The New Hebrides, to which are attached the Banks and Torres Islands, lie between the 12th and 20th degrees of south latitude, and the 165th and 170th degrees of east longitude, and have an area of about 5,700 square miles. The natives are Melanesians, but in places there is a mixture of Polynesian blood.

A joint Naval Commission was established in 1888 by agreement with France, to protect the lives and property of British and French subjects and to maintain order. By the Convention of the 20th October, 1906, a Condominium was set up with a joint Court composed of British and French Judges and a neutral President; and an executive government consisting, for some purposes, of the British and French representatives in the Group acting in concert. For other purposes British and French nationals remain subject to the control only of their national authorities. The Convention of the 20th October, 1906, has been superseded by a Convention of the 6th August, 1914, which was ratified in March, 1922.

The British and French Resident Commissioners are subordinate to the High Commissioner for the Western Pacific and the High Commissioner at Nouméa respectively.

The year 1925 was on the whole prosperous for the New Hebrides planter as the export figures show. The various products were disposed of at better prices than that of the previous year.

Revenue and Expenditure.

CONDOMINIUM REVENUE.

	1924. Francs.	*1925.* Francs.
Post Office	68,952·90	127,704·00
Port Dues	23,092·48	33,968·00
Joint Court	1,650·48	132·00
Import Duties	608,492·86	966,610·00
Export Duties	200,134·92	203,714·00
Radiotelegraph ..	23.443·28	28,804·00
Miscellaneous	18,958·16	59,782·00
Total Condominium Revenue ..	Fcs.944,725·08	Fcs.1,420,714·00

EXPENDITURE.

(*a*) *Condominium.*

	1924. Francs.	1925. Francs.
Joint Court	146,679·08	116,136·00
Constabulary	3,979·24	—
Post Office & Treasury	39,665·00	64,988·00
Public Works (Annual)	133,050·00	73,962·00
Public Works (Extraordinary)	85,365·00	207,718·00
Port and Harbour ..	7,915·92	9,470·00
Island Services ..	16,976·00	126,252·00
Medical	6,084·04	8,310·00
Customs	22,832·32	29,974·00
Telegraph & Telephone	82,081·64	83,122·00
Lands	60,733·70	66,840·00
Miscellaneous	81,380·86	1,721,440·00*
Total Condominium Expenditure ..	Frcs. 686,742·80	Frcs. 2,508,212·00

* A large part of this item is due to a transfer of funds in accordance with the New Hebrides Joint Financial Regulation No. 3 of 1925.

(*b*) *Services entirely British.**

	1924–25. £ *s.* *d.*	1925–26. £ *s.* *d.*
Establishments	4,114 19 3	4,188 10 1
Travelling	5,357 9 4	7,549 4 1
[1925–26 :— Govt. Yacht £7,220 5 10 Boat's Crew 328 18 3]		
Medical	312 0 0	325 0 0
Prison	— — —	— — —
Constabulary	1,753 4 2	1,763 15 0
Incidentals	2,062 11 11	2,296 13 1
Total Expenditure on Services exclusively British	£13,600 4 8	£16,123 2 3

* Defrayed from funds provided from the Colonial Services Vote—Subhead D4. Certain casual receipts in respect of Miscellaneous Fees of Court, Office, etc., totalling approximately £532 in 1925–26, were received for transfer to the Exchequer.

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Population.

The year's statistics show a small decrease in the number of non-native population under British jurisdiction, which totals 285 up to the 31st December, 1925. Those under the French flag for the same period number 3,039, of whom a large proportion were indentured Indo-Chinese coolies. This total represents an increase of 687 over the number under French jurisdiction in 1924. This increase was caused by further introduction of Indo-Chinese labourers. The number of French nationals, according to the figures in my possession, decreased by 91 during 1925.

A statement is appended giving details of the non-native population for the period under report.

RETURN OF NON-NATIVE POPULATION ON THE 31ST DECEMBER, 1925.

British.

Description.	*Adult Males.*	*Females and Children.*	*Totals.*
Nationals	113	119	232
Indo-Chinese :—			
Indentured Labourers ..	—	—	—
Foreign Subjects under National Regime :—			
European	14	13	27
Asiatic	26	—	26
Javanese	—	—	—
Totals	153	132	285

French.

Description.	*Adult Males.*	*Females and Children.*	*Totals.*
Nationals	262	388	650
Indo-Chinese :—			
Indentured Labourers ..	*	*	2,250*
Foreign Subjects under National Regime :—			
European	*	*	10*
Asiatic	*	*	74*
Javanese	*	*	55*
Totals	—	—	3,039

* Statistics do not show proportion of females and children, but these may be taken approximately at 25 per cent.

Native Population.

On this question nothing further can be added to the remarks of last year, as a complete system of native administration is not yet organised. Until this is done it is not practicable to obtain accurate records of all islands in the Group. By the establishment of a second Government District Agency on the island of Malekula, together with the appointment of a Native Medical Practitioner, an advance step has been taken which should prove of great value to the natives of this and neighbouring islands.

Currency, Banking, Etc.

The year opened with the French currency at an exchange rate of 87·17 to the £ sterling and closed at 127·30. The highest rate reached during the year was francs 131·70, and the lowest francs 87·17. The average for the year was francs 101·22.

There are no banking facilities in the Group; the majority of the French firms conduct their banking business with the Bank of Indo-China in Nouméa, New Caledonia.

Imports.

The value of goods of all kinds imported during 1925 has increased in comparison with the preceding year. This is accounted for by the increased shipping facilities to which reference is made elsewhere.

The comparative statement given below does not, however, reveal the position correctly, as the very large increase is in the main due to considerable purchases from Australia in sterling converted to francs at various depreciated rates of exchange.

Value in	*1924.*	*1925.*
French currency	.. Frcs. 7,929,327	Frcs. 22,004,232
British currency	.. £92,201	£217,863*

* Converted on the year's average of 101 francs to the £.

Of the total for the year 1925 the value of the British imports is estimated at francs 6,107,509 (£60,470) and that of the French at francs 15,896,723 (£157,393). The British share of the trade has considerably increased during 1925 owing partially to the introduction by Messrs. Burns Philp and Company of a steamer for the inter-island trade—S.S. " Makatea "—which has replaced the old auxiliary schooner " Motau " which was quite unsuited for the work.

Exports.

The quantities of the different articles of produce exported during the year remain approximately the same as for 1924 with the exception of copra which shows an increase which may be attributed to increased production—each year showing a greater number of coconut-bearing trees.

The total value shows an advance of 20 per cent. on the preceding year. This is partially due to better prices having been obtained—the market for most commodities having shown an upward tendency. It is also partially due to the fact that the amount of cotton "ginned" in the Group was twice that of the preceding year. The value of cotton in seed varied from £38 to £40 per ton and that of "ginned" cotton from £115 to £120 per ton.

A comparative statement of the quantities and values of the exports for 1925 and the preceding year is inserted below. The The value of the British share for the year under report is estimated at £72,239 or approximately 25 per cent. of the total, and the French share at £235,162.

The bulk of the exports, both British and French, was copra —amounting in the case of the former to approximately 80 per cent. of the total and to 45 per cent. in the latter. The balance of the British exports was cocoa, wool, trocas, and arrowroot, and of the French cocoa, cotton, coffee and trocas, which accounted for 50 per cent., the remaining 5 per cent. being maize, hides, and sandalwood, etc.

The Messageries Maritimes supplied a two-monthly service to France via the Panama during the year. The bulk of the produce of the Group is shipped direct in these vessels, with the exception of cocoa which goes to Australia.

EXPORTS.—COMPARATIVE STATEMENT.

Article.	1924. *Tons.*	1924. *Value.* £	1925. *Tons.*	1925. *Value.* £
Copra	6,792	125,652	7,370	162,154
Cotton	1,420	46,068	1,330	56,833
Cocoa	1,517	60,716	1,495	59,808
Coffee	281	7,110	285	10,111
Maize	307	1,844	193	1,357
Sandalwood	84	1,038	22	553
Wool	33	10,805	23	6,129
Miscellaneous ..	347	7,857	357	10,456
Totals		£261,090		£307,401

Shipping.

The tonnage entered at and cleared from Vila in 1925 shows an increase of nearly 50 per cent. on the preceding year. The following are the details:—

ENTERED TONNAGE.

	1925.	1924.
27 British	14,875	8,266
33 French	53,329	37,942
60	68,204	46,208

CLEARED TONNAGE.

	1925.	1924.
27 British	14,680	8,266
26 French	49,516	38,892
53	64,196	47,158

The French sloop "Cassiopée" visited the Group on two occasions during the period under report.

Criminal Statistics.

Communication has been established with several of the "Bush Tribes" in Santo and Malekula with good results, and it is noticeable that even among the least civilised they are becoming more inclined to bring their tribal troubles to the Government representatives to listen to and for advice. "Bush" murders have decreased.

Hospitals and Medical Treatment.

An advance has been made during the year under report towards improved medical treatment for the native population of the islands. Approval has been obtained for the employment of a Native Medical Practitioner from the Suva Medical School and for the fitting up of a dressing station on the island of Malekula where hitherto no medical treatment has been available. The station will be open early in 1926 and, should the result prove satisfactory, it is hoped to extend this organisation.

The Group was visited during the year by Dr. S. M. Lambert, of the International Health Board of the Rockefeller Foundation, and an inquiry made into the disease Ankylostomiasis (hookworm). He visited many of the islands in the Group, and also obtained tests from the islands he was unable to visit. It was found that approximately 92 per cent. of the native population were infected in varying degrees with the hookworm parasite.

Dr. Patrick Buxton of the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine accompanied Dr. Lambert on his tour of the Group, and investigated cases of filariasis and malaria. His report, which is to be made to the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, is expected early next year.*

The Presbyterian Mission re-opened the hospital at Lenakel, Tanna, in July, and this institution is of great assistance to all the natives in the southern islands.

The Mission hospital on Iririki continued to do good work, as did the French Government hospital in Vila. The number of patients treated by the first-named during the year was 1,220, of which 396 were "in-patients." The number treated by the French Government hospital was 6,710, of which 2,750 were "in-patients." Of the total number treated in the French hospital, 5,150 were imported Indo-Chinese labourers. The number of Europeans treated in the two hospitals respectively were 57 and 415; deaths (European), nil and 7; native, 20 and 47. Among the latter were 32 Indo-Chinese.

The French hospital in the Segond Canal (Santo) was also open during the year, but no statistics are available. This hospital is in charge of a French Government medical officer, who receives a small allowance from Condominium funds. Most of the cases treated are French plantation labourers.

The report of the Condominium Medical Officer (Major Médicin Pétel) on the general condition of the Group is attached hereto.

Report by the Condominium Medical Officer for 1925.

L'année 1925 a été très pluvieuse, les pluies ont duré jusqu'en Novembre, accompagnée de fréquents tremblements de terre.

L'état sanitaire c'est malgré cela maintenu très satisfaisant. Le nombre des entrées à l'hôpital a d'ailleurs été un peu moins élevé que l'année precedente.

Le plus grand nombre de malades traités ont été pour plaies, puludisme et dysenterie. Les affections pulmonaires ont été peu nombreuses. Il n'y a pas de l'épidémie.

Production and Natural Resources.

The principal products of the Group are copra, cotton, cocoa, and coffee, the first-mentioned by far the most important. Larger areas come into bearing each year as the trees mature, but it is not thought that any extensive areas have been put under coconuts since the date of the last report.

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* See Transactions of the Royal Society of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene, Vol. XIX, No. 8, February, 1926, pp. 420–454.

As to cotton, settlers, especially the French, are becoming increasingly alive to the importance of this easily-grown and well-paying product, and in recent years considerable areas have been planted up. During the year under review great strides have been made in this direction. A French cotton growing company has been established and is operating successfully on the island of Malekula; and an up-to-date cotton-ginning plant of 14 gins has been erected at Vila and is now working. This makes a total of three ginning plants for the New Hebrides, of which two are on the island of Epi, running 12 and 8 gins respectively. These plants are all owned and operated by French firms.

British holdings and output of cotton have decreased, owing to the difficulties in procuring labour.

The cultivation of cocoa is almost entirely a French monopoly, the acreage in British lands being practicably negligible. The French continue to expand their plantations.

There is no systematic cultivation of maize. It is usually grown as a catch-crop and forms valuable shade for newly-planted cotton.

Large tracts of valuable land are available in the New Hebrides. The existing plantations are all confined to the coast line—the interior, and, indeed, large areas of the coast as well, not yet having been touched. Given an adequate supply of labour, combined with the wonderful productiveness of the soil, there is no reason why the New Hebrides should not, from an agricultural point of view, become one of the most important Groups in the Pacific.

Wages and Cost of Living.

The cost of living for 1925 remained unaltered to any appreciable extent. Owing to the instability of the franc, prices in the stores were in a continual state of fluctuation and in many instances rises in the price of various commodities would not altogether appear warranted. On the whole, prices in general showed a tendency to increase.

Practically all perishable commodities are imported from Australia. The table given below represents a fair average of the price of commodities of daily consumption.

Butter, 2s. 9d. per lb.
Bacon, 2s. 6d. to 3s. per lb.
Eggs, 2s. 6d. per dozen.
Flour, 16s. per 50 lb. sack.
Tea, 3s. to 3s. 6d. per lb.
Potatoes, 15s. per 50 lb. sack.
Lard, 2s. per lb.
Sugar, 4d. per lb.
Tinned vegetables, 1s. 6d. to 2s. per tin.
Coffee, 3s. per lb.

Wages for casual labour are very high and 5s. to 6s. per diem is the average wage paid by local firms. The supply of labour for working vessels entering the port is becoming increasingly difficult owing to a continual demand for an increased wage. The average wage per month paid for domestic servants varies from 25s. to 30s. for a female and 35s. to 40s. for a male.

Rainfall Return of Four Stations in the New Hebrides for the Years 1921–25 inclusive.

Year.	Port Vila (Efate)	Dillons Bay (Erramanga)	Hog Harbour (East Santo)	Port Paterson (Vanua Lava, Banks.)
	17·44 S.	18·47 S.	15·05 S.	13·50 S.
	168·18 E.	166·58 E.	167·67 E.	167·34 E.
1921	102·46	69·56	151·58	193·01
1922	65·08	63·95	136·60	208·66
1923	69·79	64·32	137·09	157·86
1924	77·84	47·17	135·78	139·88
1925	74·56	61·25	127·44	128·44
Mean Annual Rainfall ...	77·94	61·25	137·69	165·57
Mean of the five years.				
1914–18 ...	76·99	74·34	119·97	105·49
1909–13 ...	90·65	107·13	134·66	113·56

Radiotelegraph.

During 1925, 1,605 messages were despatched from Vila radio station, and 1,695 received. Of those sent, 364 were on Government account, and of those received 350. The cost of the Station was 82,088 francs. The operating staff numbers two, one British and one French. News bulletins are received daily from Suva radiotelegraph station, Fiji, and the station at Saigon, French Indo-China.

G. B. SMITH-REWSE,
Resident Commissioner.

British Residency,
Vila.

Printed by H.M.S.O. Press, Harrow.

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COLONIAL REPORTS—ANNUAL.

No. 1354.

NEW HEBRIDES.

Report for 1926.

(For Reports for 1924 and 1925 see Nos. 1273 and 1334, respectively (Price 6d. each).)

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NEW HEBRIDES.

ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE YEAR 1926.

GENERAL.

The New Hebrides, to which are attached the Banks and Torres Islands, lie between the 12th and 20th degrees of South latitude and the 165th and 170th degrees of East longitude, and have an area of about 5,700 square miles. The natives are Melanesians, but in places there is a mixture of Polynesian blood.

A joint Naval Commission was established in 1888, by agreement with France, to protect the lives and property of British and French subjects and to maintain order. By the Convention of the 20th October, 1906, a Condominium was set up with a joint Court composed of British and French Judges and a neutral President; and an executive Government consisting, for some purposes, of the British and French representatives in the Group acting in concert. For other purposes, British and French nationals remain subject to the control only of their national authorities. The Convention of the 20th October, 1906, has been superseded by a Convention of the 6th August, 1914, which was ratified in March, 1922.

The British and French Resident Commissioners are subordinate to the High Commissioner for the Western Pacific and the High Commissioner at Nouméa respectively.

The year 1926 was fairly successful for both planters and traders. The British planter, although greatly handicapped by lack of sufficient labour, was able to dispose of his produce without difficulty and at a reasonable price.

FINANCE.

Currency and Banking.

The year opened with the French currency at francs 131.00 to the £ sterling and closed at 122.10. The highest rate reached during the year was francs 239.40 and the lowest francs 119.32.

There are no banking facilities in the New Hebrides. Most of the French firms carry out their banking business with the Banque de L'Indo-Chine in Nouméa.

Revenue and Expenditure.

Condominium Revenue.

	1925.	1926.
	Francs.	*Francs.*
I. Post Office	127,704.00	218,791.00
II. Port Dues	33,968.00	36,774 00
III. Joint Court	132.00	381.00
IV. Import Duties... ...	966,610.00	1,208,027.00
V. Export Duties... ...	203,714.00	226,630.00
VI. Radiotelegraph ...	28,804.00	51,095.00
VII. Miscellaneous	59,782.00	35,501.00
Total Condominium Revenue	1,420,714.00	1,777,199.00

Condominium Expenditure.

	1925.	1926.
	Francs.	*Francs.*
I. Joint Court	116,136.00	224,895.00
II. Constabulary	—	—
III. Post Office and Treasury	64,988.00	95,510.00
IV. Public Works (Annual)	73,962.00	134,355.00
V. Public Works (Extraordinary)	207,718.00	174,059.00
VI. Port and Harbour ...	9,470.00	11,663,00
VII. Island Services ...	126,252.00	189,161.00
VIII. Medical Department ...	8,310.00	24,598.00
IX. Customs	29,974.00	32,745.00
X. Telegraphs and Telephones	83,122.00	152,705.00
XI. Lands	66,840.00	42,227.00
XII. Miscellaneous ...	1,721,440.00	135,641.00
Total Condominium Expenditure	2,508,212.00	1,217,559.00

EXPENDITURE ON SERVICES ENTIRELY BRITISH. *

	1925-26.			1926-27.		
	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
Establishment	4,188	10	1	3,633	0	0
Travelling	7,549	4	0	5,402	0	0
Medical	325	0	0	350	0	0
District agents	included in Establishment.			1,620	0	0
Prison	—			21	0	0
Constabulary	1,763	15	0	1,984	0	0
Incidentals	2,296	13	1	2,651	0	0
Total Expenditure on Services entirely British	£16,123	2	2	£15,661	0	0

PRODUCTION, AND NATURAL RESOURCES.

During the year under review the New Hebrides Group has continued to progress agriculturally, and the chief exports—copra, cotton, coffee, and cocoa—show no sign of any falling-off in quantity or quality. Copra, as usual, holds first place, with an increase of a thousand tons over last year's production.

Additional areas have been put under cotton and cocoa, and coffee has received a fair amount of attention. On the island of Malekula the French Cotton Growing Société has turned its attention to coconuts, and all available cleared land has now been planted in coconuts as well as cotton.

The four cotton-ginning plants established in the Group dealt with the bulk of the cotton grown, which was almost entirely exported to Europe. These are situated at Vila (Efate), Ringdove Bay and Vuambi (Epi), and Norsup (Malekula).

As in previous years, the cultivation of cocoa remains almost entirely in French hands, there being but one British planter of that commodity.

More attention is being given to coffee, and some new areas have been planted up.

Numerous French properties have changed hands at substantial figures, the purchasers being a newly-formed French company operating on the island of Santo.

There has been no noticeable influx of settlers. Large areas of good land are still available for settlement.

* Defrayed from funds provided by Parliament—Vote for Colonial Services, Class V, 2. Certain Miscellaneous Fees of Court, Office, &c., and other casual receipts, totalling approximately £467 in 1926–27 were received for transfer to the Exchequer.

TRADE AND ECONOMICS.

Imports and Exports.

IMPORTS.

The value of goods of all kinds imported into the Group for the year under report showed an increase in francs of 8,453,173 (£54,890). Owing, however, to the fall in the franc exchange, which averaged 154 to the £ sterling, the sterling value shows a decrease on the preceding year.

Imports.

	1925.	1926.
Value in French currency...	Frs. 22,004,232	Frs. 30,457,405
Value in British currency...	£217,863*	£197,840†

Of the total imports for 1926, the value of the British share was francs 10,131,233 (£65,787), and that of the French at francs 20,326,172 (£131,988). The result shows a considerable advance in the value of the British share of the import trade, being a 65 per cent. increase as expressed in francs and 9 per cent. increase as expressed in sterling on a depreciated rate of exchange.

Appended hereto is a comparative statement of the imports for the last five years :—

Year.	British.	French.	Total.
	Francs.	Francs.	Francs.
1922	1,398,818·00	3,168,655·00	4,567,473·00
1923	1,663,972·00	4,798,749·00	6,462,721·00
1924	1,679,824·09	6,249,503·87	7,929,327·96
1925	6,107,509·97	15,896,725·40	22,004,235·37
1926	10,131,233·32	20,326,172·28	30,457,405·00

EXPORTS.

The quantities of the different produce exported from the Group during 1926 show an increase over the preceding year, and the total comparative value an advance of 22 per cent. The amount of "ginned" cotton has more than doubled, while the quantity of cleaned coffee exported has quadrupled itself.

A comparative statement of the quantities and values of the exports for 1926 and the preceding year is tabulated below. The value of the British share for the year under report is estimated at £82,326—an increase of nearly 14 per cent. over 1925—and that of the French share £291,903.

* Converted at 101 francs to the £.
† Converted at 154 francs to the £.

The bulk of the exports, both British and French, were copra, amounting in the case of the former to over 80 per cent. of the total and in the case of the latter to 40 per cent. The balance of the British exports was made up of cocoa, cotton seed, trocas shell, wool, and sandalwood, which accounted for the remaining 20 per cent.; and in case of the French, cotton, coffee, cocoa, trocas shell, maize—the first three accounting for 50 per cent., the balance of 10 per cent. being made up of miscellaneous exports such as coconuts, fruit, bêche de mer, etc.

The Messageries Maritimes line of steamers supplied the usual two to three monthly service throughout the year, and in consequence thereof most of the produce of the Group is shipped direct to European ports, with the exception of cocoa, which finds a ready market in Australia.

Exports.

Comparative Tables in Tons and Sterling.

Produce.	*1925.*		*1926.*	
	Weight.	*Value.*	*Weight.*	*Value.*
Article.	*Tons. cwts. lb.*	£ *s. d.*	*Tons. cwts. lb.*	£ *s. d.*
Copra	7,370 13 0	162,154 6 0	8,381 16 26	184,318 1 0
Cacao	1,495 4 28	59,808 10 0	1,949 11 51	87,730 17 0
Cotton (in seed)...	790 13 28	29,445 3 6	861 15 65	17,237 12 0
Cotton (ginned)...	220 9 84	26,458 10 0	556 18 106	44,556 0 0
Cotton („) 2nd	4 2 28	390 13 0	—	—
Coffee (in cherry)	227 16 84	5,696 4 9	—	—
Coffee (cleaned)...	58 17 43	4,415 3 6	273 15 70	21,890 8 0
Maize	193 19 56	1,357 16 6	207 7 30	1,659 1 6
Trocas	112 2 56	8,073 0 0	85 4 7	4,686 3 6
Burghaus ...	56 11 56	678 18 0	28 10 40	342 6 0
Bêche de Mer ...	4 6 56	73 10 6	9 3 11	183 2 0
Hides	21 10 28	602 7 0	19 15 4	533 7 6
Sandalwood ...	22 3 0	553 15 0	57 8 85	1,435 0 0
Peanuts	0 6 0	8 8 0	—	—
Ginger	0 2 56	3 10 0	—	—
Coconuts... ...	84 3 0	673 4 0	95 1 44	760 0 0
Wool	23 3 0	6,129 0 0	32 4 97	7,222 0 0
Arrowroot ...	2 4 99	125 13 6	1 4 0	67 4 0
Cotton seed ...	316 5 37	540 13 6	987 12 4	1,467 16 0
Fruit	15 4 0	212 16 0	10 2 .0	140 15 0
Miscellaneous ...	63 15 84	—	139 15 0	—
	11,083 14 39	£307,401 2 9	13,697 5 76	£374,229 7 6

Wages, and Cost of Living.

The cost of living for the year under report has increased in relation to previous years, two of the causes being the great difficulty in obtaining fresh vegetables and the failure of the supply of fresh meat.

The native and the Chinese settlements in Vila no longer find it sufficiently profitable to continue vegetable gardening, owing to the high rate of wages they are able to command in other commercial enterprises. The discontinuity in the supply of fresh meat is attributed to the difficulty of the collection and transportation of the animals to Vila and the lack of competition—there being only one butchery in Vila. The same difficulty is also experienced in regard to the supply of eggs and poultry, the prices of which are abnormally high.

The great instability of the franc during the year under report also accounted for high prices, which have not fallen in ratio to the recovery of the franc to its present value in relation to the £ sterling.

Nearly all perishable commodities are imported from Australia. Appended below is a table giving the average prices for articles of daily consumption :—

Butter, 2s. 9d. per lb.
Tea, 3s. to 3s. 6d. per lb.
Eggs, 3s. per dozen (when procurable).
Potatoes, 14s. per sack of 50 lb.
Coffee, 2s. 6d. per lb.
Tinned meat, 1s. 6d. to 2s. per tin.
Tinned vegetables, 1s. 6d. to 2s. per tin.
Flour, £1 5s. per bag of 75 lb.
Sugar, 3½d. per lb.

Native casual labour still commands 5s. to 7s. per day. The average wage paid for untrained or partially-trained domestic servants is from 25s. to 30s. per month for a female and 35s. to 45s. for a male.

POPULATION.

Non-Native Population.

The year's statistics show a decrease of 35 in the number of non-native population under British jurisdiction, which totals 250 for the year under report. Those under the French flag for the same period (excluding Asiatic indentured labourers) total 729, a slight increase on the preceding year's figures.

A statement is appended giving details of the non-native population for the year under report :—

Description.	*British.*			*French.*		
	Adult Males.	*Females and Children.*	*Total.*	*Adult Males.*	*Females and Children.*	*Total.*
Nationals	115	96	211	280	400	680
Foreigners opted under Protocol ...	11	10	21	12	—	12
Asiatics opted under Protocol	17	—	17	37	—	37
Protected subjects and citizens ...	1	—	1	2,220*	1,400	3,620
				25†	29	54
	144	106	250	2,574	1,829	4,403

* Tonkinese coolies under indenture.
† Javanese coolies under indenture.

Native Population.

It is with regret that no great advance can be reported during the current year. The establishment of a native medical practitioner on the island of Malekula has been of service, and as the natives become more accustomed to his presence better results will follow.

It has been brought to notice to a still greater degree the many cases of yaws, hookworm, &c., which are treated by the members of the various Missionary Societies in the Group, and the very real assistance they are contributing to the welfare of the native race. The same remark applies to the British settler generally, and the care extended to those working on the different plantations is of great value.

The above, however, only touches certain districts, and the question still remains, but is under careful consideration, as to how in the future the well-being of the New Hebridean native can be best preserved.

COMMUNICATIONS.

Shipping.

ENTERED TONNAGE.

		1926.	1925.
		Tons.	*Tons.*
25	British	20,335	14,875
40	French	62,265	53,329
3	American	85	—
68		82,685	68,204

CLEARED TONNAGE.

		1926. *Tons.*	1925. *Tons.*
23	British	20,594	14,680
37	French	61,067	49,516
1	American	25	—
61		81,686	64,196.

H.M.A.S. ' Sydney " and H.M.S. " Delhi " visited the Group during the month of May, and the French sloop " Cassiopée " several times during the year.

Posts.

The volume of correspondence handled by the Post Office during 1926 shows a considerable increase over preceding years, as shown from the table as follows :—

—	*From, or to, British territory.*		*From, or to, French territory.*		*Other places.*		*Total.*
	Received.	*Despatched.*	*Received.*	*Despatched.*	*Received.*	*Despatched.*	
Letters	24,000	18,000	60,000	36,000	2,400	1,200	141,600
Other articles ...	48,000	2,400	24,000	4,800	—	—	79,200
Registered articles ...	1,200	1,800	4,080	4,200	600	200	12,080
Totals	73,200	22,200	88,080	45,000	3,000	1,400	232,880

Mail communication between Australia and the Group is maintained by vessels of the Burns Philp Line, subsidized by the Government of the Commonwealth of Australia, and by the Messageries Maritimes Line, subsidized by the French Government.

Inter-island communication is maintained by the s.s. " Malinoa " (Burns Philp and Co.), and by the s.s. " St. Andre," s.s. " St. Michel " (Messrs. Ballande), and the s.s. " Neo-Hebridais " (Messrs. de Bechade).

Radiotelegraph.

In 1926, 2,041 messages were despatched from, and 2,081 received at, the Station. Of those sent, 510 were on Government account, and of those received, 476.

The cost of the Station was francs 152,705, and the receipts on account of traffic francs 52,140, of which francs 20,194 was

payable to other stations as their share of coastal charges. The operating staff of the Station numbered two—one British and one French.

The volume of messages despatched and received shows a considerable increase over the preceding year.

JUSTICE.

There were no cases of serious crime during the year under report. Reports indicate the decrease in " bush " murders, and the natives in the vicinities of the headquarters of the administrative divisions are becoming increasingly inclined to bring their troubles to the local Government representative.

The Joint Court was constituted during the year, and opened its doors on the 17th December. The majority of cases brought before that Tribunal concerned the illegal sale of alcohol to natives.

It is anticipated that during 1927 the Native Courts, under Article 8 of the Protocol of 1914, will function and that a Court of First Instance, under Article 21 (4), will be established in Central District No. 1 (Efate).

PUBLIC HEALTH.

The health of the indigenous and white populations of the Group has on the whole been good for the period under report. There have been no serious epidemics. The Paton Memorial Hospital on Iririki carried on its excellent work, the total number of native cases treated being 1,469, of which 20 were in-patients. The numbers of European and native deaths were 1 and 30 respectively.

The Mission hospital on Lenakel, Tanna, also did good work and is of the greatest assistance to both Europeans and natives in the Southern Group. No statistics are available as to the cases treated.

The French Government hospital in Vila treated 3,308 natives and 237 Europeans; the mortality being 48 and 4 respectively. The medical staff of the French hospital is being increased during the forthcoming year. The French hospital in the Segond Channel also did good work.

The Condominium dressing station established at Bushman's Bay, Malekula, under a Fijian native medical practitioner, to which reference was made in last year's report, is proving a success, especially in regard to the treatment of yaws and hookworm. Approval has been obtained in the forthcoming Budget for the employment of a second Fijian native medical practitioner, should the Suva Medical School be able to supply one, and also a French native medical practitioner from one of the French Colonies. The

combined efforts of these three native medical practitioners, when organised should show a distinct advancement in the medical treatment of the natives in several parts of the Group.

The question of the sanitation of Vila, which at present leaves much to be desired, has been the subject of much discussion. During 1927 a Sanitary Commission will be formed to deal with this important matter, and the sum of 30,000 francs is being inserted in the Budget as a preliminary expenditure on such recommendations as the Commission may make.

The Condominium Medical Officer reports as follows :—

"L'état sanitaire a été très satisfaisant en raison de la faible mortalité et par suite de l'absence de toute maladie épidémique.

"La saison chaude a été très facile à supporter, il y a eu par suite beaucoup moins de paludisme."

METEOROLOGICAL.

For the period under report there were no storms or other atmospheric disturbances of an abnormal character in the Group. A statement is appended showing the rainfall at four stations in the Group for the years 1922 to 1926 and the preceding mean average quinquennial rainfall.

RAINFALL RETURN OF FOUR STATIONS IN THE NEW HEBRIDES FOR THE YEARS 1922-1926 INCLUSIVE.

Year.	*Port Vila (Efate). 17.44 S. 168.18 E.*	*Dillons Bay (Erramanga). 18.47 S. 168.58 E.*	*Hog Harbour (East Santo). 15.05 S. 167.67 E.*	*Port Paterson (Vanua Lava, Banks). 13.50 S. 167.34 E.*
1922	65·08	63·95	136·60	208·66
1923	69·79	64·32	137·09	157·86
1924	77·84	47·17	135·78	139·88
1925	74·56	61·25	127·44	128·44
1926	73·06	62·34	133·34	137·50
Mean Annual Rainfall ...	72·06	59·80	134·05	154·46
Mean of the previous five years. 1917–1921.	78·27	68·07	120·03	160·16

G. B. SMITH-REWSE,
Resident Commissioner.

British Residency,
Vila.

(346) Wt. 11035—668 500 11/27 H. St. G. 7/ 8

COLONIAL REPORTS—ANNUAL.

No. 1393.

NEW HEBRIDES.

Report for 1927.

For Reports 1925 and 1926 see Nos. 1334 and 1354, respectively (Price 6d. each).

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Geophysical Surveying. Report of a Sub-Committee of the Committee of Civil Research. November, 1927. (E.M.B. 6.) 6*d*. (7*d*.).

The Chemistry of Wine Making. A Report on Oenological Research. (E.M.B. 7.) 1*s*. 0*d*. (1*s*. 2*d*.).

Grass and Fodder Crop Conservation in Transportable Form. (E.M.B. 8.) 1*s*. 0*d*. (1*s*. 2*d*.).

Empire Marketing Board May, 1927 to May, 1928. (E.M.B. 9.) 1*s*. 0*d*. (1*s*. 2*d*.).

IMPERIAL ECONOMIC COMMITTEE PUBLICATIONS.

The Imperial Economic Committee has issued a series of publications on the problems connected with the marketing and preparing for market of foodstuffs produced within the British Empire. The following six volumes are now ready. General Questions, 9*d*. (10*d*.); Meat, 9*d*. (10*d*.); Fruit, 4*s*. 6d. (4*s*. 10*d*.); Dairy Produce, 1*s*. (1*s*. 3*d*.); Fish, 6*d*. (8*d*.); Poultry, Eggs, Honey, 1*s*. (1*s*. 2*d*.).

The Eighth Report of the Committee, "The Functions and Work of the Imperial Economic Committee," 6*d*. (7*d*.). The relationship between the Committee and the Empire Marketing Board is explained in this Report.

All Prices are net. Those in brackets include postage.

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NEW HEBRIDES.

REPORT FOR THE YEAR 1927.

I.—GENERAL.

History.

The New Hebrides lie between the 12th and 20th degrees of South latitude, and the 165th and 170th degrees of East longitude, and are of an area of roughly 5,700 square miles. The principal port of the Group and the seat of Government is the township of Vila, on the island of Efate, in the southern part of the Group and about 5 or 6 days' steam from Sydney, New South Wales.

Santo, the largest and one of the northernmost islands of the Group was discovered by Quiros in 1606, who touched at the Bay of St. Phillip and St. James (Big Bay). Under the impression that he had located the long sought Southern Continent he named it "Tierra Australis del Espiritu Santo," and it is recorded that a settlement was established at the River Jordan, but was later abandoned on account of sickness and dissensions with the natives.

Nothing further was heard of the Group until the year 1768, when Cook touched at various points and, in the year 1774, charted and named most of the larger islands.

At about the same period of Cook's discoveries, the French navigator, Bougainville, sailed between the islands of Santo and Malekula, thereby disproving Quiros' theory as to the existence of the great Southern Continent. The strait through which he passed still bears his name.

In 1788 the French Government expedition under La Perouse is supposed to have visited these islands, but came to an untimely end at Vanikoro, in the Santa Cruz Group, a little to the north of the New Hebrides.

The Banks Group, forming part of the Northern New Hebrides, was sighted by Bligh in 1793.

D'Entrecasteau, Dumont, d'Urville, Belcher, Markham and others, are among the early voyagers whose accounts of these islands are of interest.

The New Hebrides for many years was practically a "no man's land" and a favourite hunting ground for recruiting vessels, but, in the year 1887, a Joint Naval Commission was appointed, charged with the protection of the lives and property of the subjects of the two nations—France and England—in the islands. The

Commission was composed of two officers from each of the English and French warships in these waters and was presided over alternately by the British and French Commanders.

In 1895 an Arbitration Court was formed by the colonists, but the Joint Naval Commission pronounced its veto and the Court was dissolved.

In 1902 the first British Resident Commissioner was appointed, the French Government having a short time previously appointed a similar official.

General.

By the Convention of 20th October, 1906, a Condominium was set up with a joint Court composed of British and French Judges and a neutral President; and an executive government consisting, for some purposes, of the British and French representatives in the Group acting in concert. For other purposes, British and French nationals remain subject to the control only of their national authorities. The Convention of 20th October, 1906, has been superseded by a Convention of 6th August, 1914, which was ratified in March, 1922.

The British and French Resident Commissioners are subordinate to the High Commissioner for the Western Pacific and the High Commissioner at Noumea respectively.

A Commission of Inquiry into the position of British settlers in the Group arrived at Vila on 4th April in H.M.S. "Diomede," and left on 18th April. During the course of the inquiry they visited many places in the Group.

On 17th August the death occurred of His Britannic Majesty's Resident Commissioner, Mr. G. B. Smith-Rewse, who died at the British Residency on Iririki. His loss was much regretted by the whole community.

H.M.A.S. "Adelaide" visited the Group during September.

Geography.

The islands of the New Hebrides, with which are included the Banks and Torres groups, form an incomplete double chain stretching in a north-north-west direction for a length of 550 miles and consist of about 80 islands. Santo is the largest with an area of approximately 1,500 square miles and a coastline of over 200 miles. Of the smaller islands there are about 18, averaging a little over 5 square miles. The larger islands are high (highest point 5,520 feet) and show extensive exposures of volcanic rocks underlying areas of raised coral terraces, which latter reach in some cases an elevation of quite 2,000 feet. The smaller islands are often wholly

volcanic. There are three principal volcanoes in the Group, which are usually active, situated on the islands of Tanna, Lopevi and Ambrym. Santo contains numerous small rivers, but only navigable to minor craft.

The Group has three good harbours. Vila, Efate, the headquarters of the Administration, lies on one of these harbours. It is a small town built on the surrounding hills, which extend to the beach, on which are to be found the principal business houses. The European languages spoken in the Group are English and French. There is no unification of the native language; each island speaks a different tongue and there are many different dialects in the same island. British and French currency is legal tender in the Group, and the British and French systems of weights and measures are in use.

The natives are Melanesians, but in places there is a mixture of Polynesian blood.

II.—FINANCE.

The year opened with the French currency at francs 123.05 to the £ sterling and closed at 124.02. The highest rate reached during the year was francs 124.10, and the lowest 122.01. At present there is no bank in the New Hebrides. Most of the French firms carry out their banking business with the Banque de l'Indo-Chine in Noumea, New Caledonia, and most of the British firms with banks in Australia.

Under the Anglo-French Protocol each of the two Signatory Powers defrays the expenses of its own National Administration in the Group. The expenses in connection with the joint services, which consist of the Medical Services, Post and Telegraphs, Public Works, Customs, Treasury, Port and Harbour, Joint Court and certain other Courts, Land Registry, etc., are met from funds provided by local taxation. In the event of the revenue thus obtained proving insufficient, the two Signatory Powers would each pay one-half of the deficit. Since 1921 the revenue obtained by local taxation has proved sufficient.

Revenue and Expenditure.

CONDOMINIUM REVENUE

	£
1923	32,766
	Francs.
1924	944,725.08
1925	1,420,714.00
1926	1,777,199.00
1927	3,037,711.00

CONDOMINIUM EXPENDITURE.

	£
1923	24,900
	Francs.
1924	686,742.80
1925	*2,508,212.00
1926	1,217,599.00
1927	2,220,479.00

The import and export Customs duties and the port and harbour dues and rates of postage were increased during the year under report. In regard to imports, there is an *ad valorem* duty of 12 per cent. on spirits and tobacco, a 20 per cent. *ad valorem* duty on lace, perfumery and other luxuries, while the bulk of the other imports are subject to a 6 per cent. *ad valorem* tax. For further reference to import duties attention is invited to Joint Regulation No. 2 of 1927.

The export duty is 1 per cent. *ad valorem* with the exception of that on turtle shell which is 5 per cent. *ad valorem* (Joint Regulation No. 3 of 1927).

EXPENDITURE ON SERVICES ENTIRELY BRITISH.

	£
1923-24	12,150
1924-25	13.759
1925-26	20,248†
1926-27	15,693

The above expenditure is defrayed from funds provided by Parliament on Civil Estimates, Vote for Colonial Services, Class V, 2. There are certain miscellaneous fees of Court, etc., and other casual receipts totalling a few hundred pounds each year, which are eventually paid to the Exchequer as Extra Receipts. The sum voted for British Services includes, among other things, the personal emoluments of the British Resident Commissioner and Staff, Police Force, the District Agents, and the upkeep of the Government yacht.

III.—PRODUCTION AND NATURAL RESOURCES.

Agricultural development of the Group during the year under review has continued. Although no extensive areas of new country have been opened up, good progress has been made.

Of the produce exported, copra continues to hold pride of place, and an increase in this commodity of about 1,800 tons will be noticed over last year's figures. With more plantations coming into bearing each year, a yearly increase in production can be anticipated.

The greater part of the copra produced in the New Hebrides is grown on European plantations. Of the total shown perhaps

* NOTE.—A large part of this total was due to a transfer of funds in accordance with the New Hebrides Joint Financial Regulation No. 3 of 1925.

† Exceptional items were included.

2,500 tons may be attributed to purely native sources—mainly from the islands of Tanna and Aoba.

Practically the whole of the copra is exported to Europe.

Cocoa, cotton and coffee, in order of precedence, are the next most important items of agricultural enterprise in the Group. Cocoa continues to be much favoured by settlers, and additional areas have been planted up.

Cotton production remains practically stationary: owing to the comparatively low prices realised in recent years many settlers have ceased to cultivate it while, for the same reason, native production has practically ceased.

The production of coffee and cocoa is entirely in French hands. A certain amount of cotton is grown by British settlers, but in the main their attention is devoted to copra.

No progress has been made in the cultivation of coffee; the area under cultivation remains about the same, but the export has considerably decreased, in spite of the fact that good prices have been realised. This product is not particularly favoured by planters in the Group—possibly on account of the extra work and machinery required in its preparation when compared with the comparatively simple preparation of cocoa for the market.

The four cotton-ginning plants established in the Group have dealt with the bulk of the cotton grown. A few hundred tons have been sent to Noumea, New Caledonia, for ginning, but the tendency is to get the ginning done locally if possible, owing to the extra costs involved carrying out this operation in Noumea.

The bulk of the cotton produced in the New Hebrides is exported to France.

Certain important properties have passed into French hands at substantial figures, the purchasers being two newly-formed French companies operating on the islands of Santo and Efate.

The number of British settlers in the Group has decreased, owing to disposal of their properties, whereas a slight increase in the French total is observed.

The British share of the export trade would amount to about 25 per cent. of the total.

From the following figures it will be seen that the agricultural development of the Group is increasing and the general position at the end of 1927 shows a decided improvement over that of the previous year.

The fertility of the soil in almost every island of the Group enables most tropical agricultural products to be grown very easily. The almost entire absence of diseases and pests common to other tropical countries is an important factor in ensuring to the planter the maximum results. The rainfall is abundant, and hurricanes are of rare occurrence and are usually confined to a small area.

Comparative Table in Tons and Sterling.

Produce.	1923.		1924.		1925.		1926.		1927.	
	Tons.	Value. £	Tons.	Value. £	Tons.	Value. £	Tons.	Value. £	Tons.	Value. £
Copra	6,302	113,428	6,792	125,652	7,371	162,154	8,382	184,318	10,204	204,090
Cocoa	1,062	42,484	1,517	60,716	1,495	59,808	1,949	87,731	2,344	140,697
Cotton	1,287	32,185	1,420	46,068	*1,015	56,294	*1,420	44,556	†501	40,170
Coffee	366	14,666	281	7,110	287	10,111	274	21,890	123	4,842
Trochas	—	—	—	—	112	8,073	85	4,686	86	4,299
Maize	247	1,977	307	1,844	194	1,358	207	1,659	118	949
Sandalwood	50	1,492	84	1,038	22	554	57	1,435	23	384
Wool	30	6,000	33	10,805	23	6,129	32	7,222	5	601
Cotton seed	—	—	—	—	316	541	987	1,467	880	880
Miscellaneous	—	5,709	347	7,857	248	2,379	304	19,265	63	1,116
Totals	9,344	£217,941	10,781	£261,090	11 083	£307,401	13,697	£374,229	14,347	£398,028

* Mixed.

† Ginned.

IV.—TRADE AND ECONOMICS.

The total value of goods of all kinds imported into the New Hebrides during the year under review amounted to £307,939, or 38,184,562 francs, an increase on a sterling basis over the previous year's operations of £110,099, or 7,727,157 francs, on a franc basis.

IMPORT VALUES.

Year.	*British Currency.*	*French Currency.*	*Remarks.*
	£	Francs.	
1923	85,300	6,462,721	@ 77 francs = £
1924	92,201	7,929,327	@ 86 „ = £
1925	217,863	22.004,232	@ 101 „ = £
1926	197,840	30,457,405	@ 154 „ = £
1927	307,939	38,184,562	@ 124 „ = £

The British share of the import trade is approximately 25 per cent. of the whole.

A fair amount of trade is done with the port of Sydney, New South Wales, mostly in necessaries of life such as flour, sugar, tinned meats, etc., while spirits, building material and soft goods form an important part. The balance of the imports come mostly from France.

The principal importing firms are : (British) Messrs. Burns Philp (South Sea) Co., Ltd., Messrs. Gubbay Bros., of Vila. (French) Les Comptoirs Français des Nouvelles-Hebrides, Société de Béchade, Vila and Santo, La Compagnie Franco-Hebridaise, Vila and Santo, and Hagen Bros., Epi.

There are four small trading steamers employed in the inter-insular trade, belonging to commercial firms in the Group. Each of these steamers is furnished with a well stocked trade room, where most of the settlers' requirements can be met. Produce (copra, cotton, cocoa, coffee) bought from the settlers by these vessels is usually carried no farther than Vila, and then transhipped into the large cargo boats of the Messageries Maritimes.

There is no great difference in the prices charged by the different firms for goods; nor does the price offered for the various items of produce vary to any great extent, as these vessels are all equipped with wireless telegraphy and are enabled to keep in close touch with the markets.

Competition is naturally very keen, but it is not thought that British trade suffers thereby to any appreciable extent.

Some few years ago the bulk of the New Hebrides trade was confined to Australia, but since the advent of the Messageries Maritimes cargo boats, enabling the settlers and exporters of produce to ship direct to Europe, trade has gradually been diverted from Australia in favour of cheaper freights and direct communication with Europe.

Wages and Cost of Living.

The cost of living during 1927 remains approximately the same as in the preceding year's report. The position in Vila does not improve, and fresh vegetables are almost unprocurable. The supply of fresh meat is inadequate for the needs of the European population and the same applies to eggs and poultry, the prices of which remain abnormally high.

The comparative stability of the franc has steadied the local market, but the demand for local produce and the inadequacy of the supply has caused the dealer to maintain high prices. Practically all perishable commodities are imported from Australia. Casual native labour commands 6s. per day and food. Domestic servants are difficult to obtain and are usually sought in other islands where competitive conditions are not so great. For untrained female domestics 25s. to 30s. per month and food is an average wage, and 30s. to 40s. in the case of a male.

Appended below is a table giving the average prices for articles of daily consumption :—

Sugar	4d. per lb.
Tea	3s. 6d. per lb.
Butter	2s. 9d. per lb.
Coffee	2s. 3d. per lb.
Eggs	4s. 0d. per dozen
Flour	18s. 6d. per bag of 50 lb.
Potatoes ...	18s. 6d. per sack of 56 lb.
Tinned meat ...	1s. 6d. to 2s. per tin.

V.—COMMUNICATIONS.

Shipping.

Vila is at present the only Port of Entry in the Group. The amount of tonnage entered and cleared from the Group for the year under report totalled 189,500 tons, which on analysis gives the following result :—

ENTERED.

	Tons.	
British	13,882	(19 vessels.)
French	80,490	(46 vessels.)
Other	641	(1 Chinese.)
Total	95,013	

CLEARED.

	Tons.	
British	13,524	(18 vessels.)
French	80,322	(40 vessels.)
Other	641	(1 Chinese.)
Total	94,487	

The Messageries Maritimes line of steamers run a two-monthly service of " cargo mixte " from Vila to Marseilles via Tahiti, Panama and Martinique.

The S.S. " Makambo " (Burns Philp Line) and the S.S. " Dupleix " (Messageries Maritimes) maintain communication with Australia—the former via Norfolk Island and Lord Howe Island, and the latter via Noumea (New Caledonia).

Inter-island communication is maintained by the S.S. " Malinoa " (Burns Philp South Sea Co., Ltd.), " Saint Andre " and " Saint Michel " (Messrs. Ballande & Co.) and the S.S. " Neo-Hébridais " (Messrs. de Béchade). There are also numerous small sailing and auxiliary craft that ply between the islands.

Messrs. Ballande also run three large steamers (Vila-Marseilles) to ship their own merchandise as and when necessary.

Roads.

Internal communications in the Group are in an undeveloped state. In several of the islands roads have been constructed near the coast for the purpose of bringing merchandise down to the ships. Such roads, which are of a primitive nature, have been made by local traders, plantation owners and missionaries.

At the capital, Vila, better conditions obtain. In the town itself there are a number of fairly good roads, but they do not extend, except in a few cases, beyond the limits of the town. Efforts are being made to construct roads to the outlying districts and to make into roads the present tracts that are constantly used by planters situated at a distance from Vila, for commercial purposes. All road making at present is carried out by contract with local planters. Of late, the importation of motor-cars and commercial motor vehicles into the different islands has added considerably to the importance of the work of road construction. On Efate there are thirty motor vehicles and the necessity of providing more adequate highways is engaging the attention of the Administration.

Railways.

There are no railways proper in the Group. A small two-foot rail track runs from Vila to the outskirts of the village of Mele and is used for various commercial purposes.

Posts.

The volume of correspondence handled by the Post Office continues to increase. Appended below is an analysis of the Post Office returns for the year under report. Mail communication is maintained by the S.S. " Makambo " and S.S. " Dupleix " mentioned elsewhere—these vessels being subsidised by the

Commonwealth Government and French Government respectively. The regular sailings of the large Messageries Maritimes vessels are also subsidised by the French Government. Owing to the large number of Tonkinese labourers imported into the Group the handling of correspondence from and to French Indo-China has considerably increased.

The Condominium has a special postage stamp, suitably designed to represent the dual control and inscribed with British and French currency values at par of exchange. They may be purchased in either currency at the official rate of exchange. There are two mail services from Australia every month.

—	*From, or to, British territory.*		*From, or to, French territory.*		*Other places.*		*Total.*
	Received.	*Despatched.*	*Received.*	*Despatched.*	*Received.*	*Despatched.*	
Letters ...	24,000	18,000	62,000	40,000	2,500	1,300	147,800
Other articles	48,000	2,500	28,000	5,000	—	—	83,500
Registered articles	1,200	1,000	4,000	3,500	300	100	10,100
Totals... ...	73,200	21,500	94,000	48,500	2,800	1,400	241,400

Radiotelegraph.

There is no cable communication with the Group but a Government radiotelegraph station was established at Vila in 1916. This station is worked by two operators—one British and one French. The total number of messages handled by the station during 1927 was 8,808. Of this number, 4,428 were despatched and 4,380 received. Of those sent, 806 were on Government account, and of those received 720.

The cost of the station during 1927 amounted to francs 168,884, and the receipts on account of traffic, francs 72,745. Of this sum francs 41,314 was payable to other stations as their share of the coastal charges.

The bulk of the traffic is with Noumea—the majority of the messages for Australia passing through that station. There is a daily service with Suva (Fiji) and communication is also maintained with other stations in the Pacific groups.

Telephones.

There are fifty telephone installations in and around Vila, operated by one central exchange. The system is in process of being extended to the outlying districts. Owing to weather conditions during the hurricane season it is a difficult matter to keep

the system in a state of efficiency. There is no telephone communication in the other islands.

VI.—JUSTICE, POLICE AND PRISONS.

Justice.

The Joint Court, which consists of a British and French judge, presided over by a judge of neutral nationality, is the principal Condominium instrument for the dispensation of justice in the Group. In 1927 the Joint Court delivered 44 judgments, the majority of these being for the illegal sale of alcohol to natives in contravention of Article 59 of the Protocol. There were no cases of serious crime during the year under report.

Besides the Joint Court, the Protocol provides for the institution of Courts of First Instance in the various Administrative Districts, presided over by the Condominium District Agents. These Courts have jurisdiction over infractions of the Protocol (or of Joint Regulations made thereunder) except those concerning the recruitment and engagement of native labour. Unfortunately, various difficulties have manifested themselves in the constitution of these Courts and they have not yet been established.

The Protocol further provides for the institution of Native Courts and a Code of Native Law. The latter is about to be promulgated and the year 1928 should see the Native Courts functioning in some areas.

Police.

The Group is policed by two separate forces of armed Native Constabulary, with headquarters at Vila, each in charge of a Commandant under the orders of the respective Resident Commissioner.

The British force is composed of natives recruited from the islands of the New Hebrides, and the French force partly of New Hebrideans and Loyalty Islanders.

The duties of the native constabulary consist in the maintenance of law and order among the native population of the civilized areas, general police and patrol work, the repression of native disorders, and the guarding of native prisoners.

Each of the District Agents is provided with a small detachment of police from Headquarters, to assist them in the execution of their duties.

Both the British and French Commandants, in addition to their duties as police officers to the Condominium, also act as police officers in so far as their own nationals are concerned, and are charged with the conduct of police cases before their respective national Courts.

The whole of the cost of maintenance of the two forces is defrayed by their respective national Governments; except when acting jointly, when the expenses are met from Condominium Government funds.

Prisons.

There are two national prisons situated in the town of Vila, in which natives and whites under sentence of imprisonment are confined. The cost of maintenance of prisoners sentenced by the national tribunals is met from national funds of the Government concerned, and that of natives sentenced by the Resident Commissioners and the various mixed Courts, from Condominium funds.

There is no Condominium prison staff. Each Commandant of Police acts as prison keeper and is responsible for the supervision of the prisoners placed in his charge. He is assisted by police constables who act as warders.

Native prisoners are employed on works of general utility, such as the making and cleaning of roads, weeding Government paddocks, transport of material for various Government buildings, etc.

The daily average of prisoners confined in the British prison amounted to 11.5. Two deaths occurred during the period under report, and the health of prisoners on the whole was good.

VII.—PUBLIC WORKS.

Owing to the increasing trade of the Group and the work in connection with titles to land, to which reference is made elsewhere, the Condominium personnel has increased, and this has made necessary the construction of new houses and the importation of quantities of building material. Most of the work in connection with the erection of buildings is carried out by local contract. The amount spent on Public Works—Annually Recurrent and Extraordinary—for the year under report amounted to approximately 700,000 francs (£5,646). Of this sum 200,000 francs (£1,612) was spent on the improvement and making of roads and bridges and the balance on the repairs to present buildings and the erection of new works.

There is difficulty in procuring local labour, both skilled and unskilled.

VIII.—PUBLIC HEALTH.

From the report of the Condominium Medical Officer, which is given at the end of this section, the health of the European and native population has been satisfactory for the period under report. A mild epidemic of measles occurred in the Group during the latter half of the year, but it was not of a serious nature and there were few deaths.

Hospitals.

There are two well-equipped hospitals at Vila; the John G. Paton Memorial Hospital, administered by the Presbyterian Mission of New South Wales, and the French Government hospital. Statistics of the work performed by these institutions are given below. The Paton Memorial Hospital receives a subsidy from the British Government. Both hospitals are in charge of qualified medical practitioners.

Cases Treated.	*British Hospital.*		*French Hospital.*		*Total.*
	Europeans.	*Natives and Asiatics.*	*Europeans.*	*Natives and Asiatics.*	
"In" Patients ...	30	286	238	2,892	3,446
"Out" Patients ...	32	675	2,731	4,627	8,065
Totals	62	961	2,969	7,519	11,511
Deaths	1	19	7	67	94

There is a small French Government hospital on Santo, and a hospital on Tanna, run also by the Presbyterian Mission and subsidised by the British Government. These are both in charge of qualified medical men and have done excellent work. The Condominium Government have a dressing station on Malekula in charge of a Fijian Native Medical Practitioner, and natives in the surrounding district receive medical attention. There is also a well-equipped private hospital on Santo, run by the Agricultural Society and in charge of a European doctor, and another small hospital on Malekula also run by private enterprise.

Diseases.

Malaria is widespread and epidemic from November to May. Beyond malaria and occasional cases of blackwater fever there are no other diseases to which the European is specially liable except dysentery (amoebic), which is endemic throughout the year and epidemic during the rainy season.

The New Hebrides native suffers mostly from yaws, malaria, dysentery and ankylostomiasis (hookworm). Good work has been carried out in the Group in the treatment of yaws by arsenical preparations by the various institutions and by missionaries and others. Various skin diseases occur among the natives from time to time and occasional cases of tetanus. Pulmonary disease also frequently occurs.

Sanitation.

Much requires to be done under this head to effect any decided improvement. A commencement has been made in Vila by the clearing of bush and the filling in of mosquito breeding places. A substantial sum is being voted for 1928 to carry on this work. The water supply of Vila is rain water collected in tanks by occupants of houses. During the rainy season when dysentery is epidemic it is advisable to treat the water chemically.

Climate.

The climate of the New Hebrides is classed as unhealthy, but it compares favourably with most tropical places. The year is divided into two marked seasons, the wet season commencing in November and terminating in April, and the dry season from May to October. The New Hebrides being in the hurricane belt is liable to hurricanes during the wet season. The mean temperature of Efate is 77° F., ranging from 63° F. to 89° F. The islands south of Efate are considerably cooler and those to the north about 7° warmer.

REPORT OF CONDOMINIUM MEDICAL OFFICER FOR 1927.

The year 1927 has been very wet. Public health generally maintained a fairly satisfactory level. There was an outbreak of measles in Vila. No deaths occurred among the European children, but a fairly heavy toll was taken of the natives owing to lack of care in the early stages of the disease.

Whooping-cough and chicken-pox, as well as influenza, have also prevailed in the Group. A pulmonary form of influenza caused many deaths among the natives—chiefly in the outlying islands.

IX.—EDUCATION.

There are three primary schools in the town of Vila, all French; (1) a girls' school, under the supervision of the Sisters of the Sacred Heart Mission; (2) a school for boys, in charge of the Marist Mission, both entirely supported from Mission funds. School fees are purely nominal and the education is not of a very high order. The third school is owned and controlled by the French Government, and is classed as an infants' school. Attendance is not confined to whites but all colours and nationalities are freely admitted. Outside of the town of Vila no facilities whatever exist for the education of white children, who are usually sent to Noumea or Sydney for this purpose.

The various Missions in the Group include elementary education in their curriculum, and good progress has been made in this direction among the native population. On the island of Tangoa, Santo, an institution, for the purpose of training natives to become

mission teachers is supported by the Presbyterian Mission, and a similar institution is also run by the Melanesian Mission on the island of Aoba.

There are no schools controlled or supported by the Condominium Government.

X.—LANDS AND SURVEY.

The whole of the land in the New Hebrides now occupied or claimed by white settlers and others was originally acquired from native owners. Ownership at the present day is based on those deeds, and various transfers of the same, together with occupation and improvements. No indefeasible titles exist, but the Joint Court, which is also a Land Court, will be in a position to commence this important work during the forthcoming year. There are approximately 1,000 claims to ownership, representing an approximate area of 2,000,000 acres.

To facilitate the work of the Joint Court, in the granting of titles, trigonometrical surveys of certain portions of the Group have been made, and this work is being proceeded with by the Lands Department. A staff of surveyors is attached to the Joint Court.

XI.—LABOUR.

The employment of native labourers under contract in the New Hebrides is regulated by the provisions of the Anglo-French Protocol of 1914. In addition, British settlers are bound by King's Labour Regulations Nos. 1 of 1913 and 10 of 1926. These instruments provide adequate safeguards both for employer and employee.

As the agricultural development of the Group progressed, the supply of labour from local sources became increasingly difficult to obtain and was inadequate to meet the demand. Settlers experienced great difficulty in extending their cultivations and in harvesting their crops. The difficulty, in so far as French settlers were concerned, was solved by the importation of Indo-Chinese coolies under the auspices of the French Government in the year 1921. The experiment was a success, and the movement has continued ever since. There are at the present moment in the Group some 4,500 Tonkinese coolies under contract to French settlers.

British settlers are still dependent on local sources for the working of their plantations, but the supply is not equal to their needs.

There are many causes to be assigned for the native's disinclination for work, but chief among them may be cited the progress of civilisation within the Group, which has brought within the reach of the native such luxuries as he craves for and which are now obtainable with a minimum of effort on his part. A number of

the natives to-day own coconut and cotton plantations of small dimensions, the produce of which, disposed of to the nearest trader, obviates any necessity for leaving home for the life of a plantation labourer in the service of a white man.

XII.—POPULATION.

Non-Native.

A statement is appended giving details of the non-native population for the year under report :—

Description.	*British.*			*French.*		
	Adult Males.	*Females and Children.*	*Total.*	*Adult Males.*	*Females and Children.*	*Total.*
Nationals	121	79	200	422	298	720
Foreigners opted under Protocol ...	11	12	23	14	—	14
Asiatics opted under Protocol	15	—	15	40	—	40
Protected subjects and citizens ...	1	1	2	2,780*	1,720	4,500
				25†	29	54
Totals ...	148	92	240	3,281	2,047	5,328

* Tonkinese coolies under indenture.
† Javanese coolies under indenture.

Compared with the figures for the previous year the British population shows a slight decrease, whereas that of the French shows an increase of forty nationals, and 885 others principally Indo-Chinese coolies.

Native.

No reliable figures are available concerning the total of the native population. Various estimates have been made from time to time ranging from 60,000 to 10,000, but it is not thought that a census, were such practicable, would reveal any greater number than 50,000 The islands most thickly populated, in order of importance, are Malekula, Pentecost, Santo, Tanna, Aoba, Ambrym, Epi and Efate.

There is no doubt that in general the population is on the decline, although on the islands of Tanna and Tongoa the numbers have remained practically stationary for the past few years.

It is significant that the inhabitants of the two islands on which the population at least is not decreasing are perhaps the keenest traders and wealthiest natives of the whole Group.

XIII.—METEOROLOGICAL.

For the period under report there was only one atmospheric disturbance in the Group. This occurred between the 27th and 30th of December, when a violent storm swept over Efate and some damage was done to plantations and to small craft in Vila harbour. The storm did not attain the velocity of a hurricane. A statement is appended below showing the rainfall at four stations in the Group for the years 1923 to 1927, and the preceding mean quinquennial rainfall.

Year.	*Port Vila (Efate). 17.44 S. 168.18 E.*	*Dillons Bay (Erromanga). 18.47 S. 168.58 E.*	*Hog Harbour (East Santo). 15.05 S. 167.67 E.*	*Port Paterson (Vanua Lava, Banks Is.). 13.50 S. 167.34 E.*
1923	69·79	64·32	137·09	157·86
1924	77·84	47·17	135·78	139·88
1925	74·56	61·25	127·44	128·44
1926	73·06	62·34	133·34	137·50
1927	74·26	59·77	134·41	143·42
Mean Annual for five years	73·90	58·97	133·61	141·42
Mean, previous five years...	78·27	68·07	120·03	160·16

G. A. JOY,
Acting Resident Commissioner.

BRITISH RESIDENCY,
VILA, NEW HEBRIDES,
23rd March, 1928.

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NEW HEBRIDES.

REPORT FOR THE YEAR 1928.

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I.—GENERAL.

History.

The New Hebrides lie between the 12th and 20th degrees of South latitude, and the 165th and 170th degrees of East longitude, and are of an area of roughly 5,700 square miles. The principal port of the Group and the seat of Government is the township of Vila, on the island of Efate, in the southern part of the Group and about 5 or 6 days' steam from Sydney, New South Wales.

Santo, the largest and one of the northernmost islands of the Group was discovered by Quiros in 1606, who touched at the Bay of St. Phillip and St. James (Big Bay). Under the impression that he had located the long sought Southern Continent he named it "Tierra Australis del Espiritu Santo," and it is recorded that a settlement was established at the River Jordan, but was later abandoned on account of sickness and dissensions with the natives.

Nothing further was heard of the Group until the year 1768, when Cook touched at various points and, in the year 1774, charted and named most of the larger islands.

At about the same period of Cook's discoveries the French navigator, Bougainville, sailed between the islands of Santo and Malekula, thereby disproving Quiros' theory as to the existence of the great Southern Continent. The strait through which he passed still bears his name.

In 1788 the French Government expedition under La Perouse is supposed to have visited these islands, but came to an untimely end at Vanikoro, in the Santa Cruz Group, a little to the north of the New Hebrides.

The Banks Group, forming part of the Northern New Hebrides, was sighted by Bligh in 1793.

D'Entrecasteau, Dumont d'Urville, Belcher, Markham, and others, are among the early voyagers whose accounts of these islands are of interest.

The New Hebrides for many years was practically a "no man's land," and a favourite hunting ground for recruiting vessels, but, in the year 1887, a Joint Naval Commission was appointed, charged with the protection of the lives and property of the subjects of the two nations—France and England—in the islands. The Commission was composed of two officers from each of the English and French warships in these waters and was presided over alternately by the British and French Commanders.

In 1895 an Arbitration Court was formed by the colonists, but the Joint Naval Commission pronounced its veto and the Court was dissolved.

In 1902 the first British Resident Commissioner was appointed, the French Government having a short time previously appointed a similar official.

Geography.

The islands of the New Hebrides, with which are included the Banks and Torres Groups, form an incomplete double chain stretching in a north-north-west direction for a length of 550 miles and consist of about 80 islands. Santo is the largest with an area of approximately 1,500 square miles and a coastline of over 200 miles. Of the smaller islands there are about 18 averaging a little over 5 square miles. The larger islands are high (highest point 6,169 feet) and show extensive exposures of volcanic rocks underlying areas of raised coral terraces, which latter reach in some cases an elevation of quite 2,000 feet. The smaller islands are often wholly volcanic. There are three principal volcanoes in the Group, which are usually active, situated on the islands of Tanna, Lopevi, and Ambrym. Santo contains numerous small rivers, only navigable, however, to minor craft.

The Group has three good harbours, Vila, Efate, the headquarters of the Administration, lies on one of these harbours. It is a small town built on the surrounding hills, which extend to the beach, on which are to be found the principal business houses. The

European languages spoken in the Group are English and French. There is no unification of the native language ; each island speaks a different tongue, and there are many different dialects in the same island. British and French currencies are legal tender in the Group, and the British and French systems of weights and measures are in use.

The natives are Melanesians, but in places there is a mixture of Polynesian blood.

General.

By the Convention of 20th October, 1906, a Condominium was set up with a Joint Court composed of British and French Judges and a neutral President ; and an executive Government consisting, for some purposes, of the British and French representatives in the Group acting in concert. For other purposes British and French nationals remain subject to the control only of their national authorities. The Convention of 20th October, 1906, has been superseded by a Convention of 6th August, 1914, which was ratified in March, 1922.

The British and French Resident Commissioners are subordinate to the High Commissioner for the Western Pacific and the High Commissioner at Noumea respectively.

II.—FINANCE.

During July, 1928, the franc was stabilised at 124.21 to the £ sterling. For local purposes the rate 124 was adopted as from the 1st October to facilitate commercial transactions in both currencies which are legal tender in the Group. The year opened with the French currency at 124.02 at which figure it remained until stabilised.

There are not at present any banks within the Group, though to a limited extent banking facilities are given by some of the larger commercial houses. The French firms carry out their banking business mostly with the Banque de l'Indo-Chine in Noumea, New Caledonia, and the British firms with banks in Australia.

Under the 1914 Convention each of the two Powers defrays the expenses of its own national administration in the Group. Expenses in connection with the Joint Services, viz :—Medical Service, Post and Telegraphs, Customs, Public Works, Port and Harbour, Treasury, Joint Court and Summary Courts, Land Registry, etc., are met from funds provided by local taxation. Should the revenue prove insufficient, the two Powers are bound to contribute to the deficit in equal proportions.

Since the year 1921 no grant-in-aid for this purpose has been necessary.

Revenue and Expenditure.

Condominium Revenue.

Year.	*French currency.* *Francs.*		*British currency.* £	*Remarks.**
1924 ...	944,725	or	10,985	Converted at francs 86=£
1925 ...	1,420,714	or	14,066	francs 101=£
1926 ...	1,777,199	or	11,540	francs 154=£
1927 ...	3,037,711	or	24,497	francs 124=£
1928 ...	3,463,551	or	27,932	francs 124=£

Condominium Expenditure.

Year.	*French currency.* *Francs.*		*British currency.* £	*Remarks.**
1924 ...	686,742	or	7,985	Converted at francs. 86=£
1925 ...	2,508,212	or	24,833	francs 101=£
1926 ...	1,217,599	or	7,906	francs 154=£
1927 ...	2,220,479	or	17,907	francs 124=£
1928 ...	3,568,404	or	28,777	francs 124=£

The import and export (Customs) duties are set out in Joint Regulations Nos. 2 and 3 of 1927. In regard to imports there is an *ad valorem* duty of 12 per cent. on spirits and tobacco and a 20 per cent. *ad valorem* duty on lace, perfumery and other luxuries. The bulk of the imports are subject to a 6 per cent. *ad valorem* duty. Export duty is 1 per cent. *ad valorem* with the exception of that on turtle shell which is 5 per cent.

Expenditure on Services Entirely British.

	£
1924–25	13,759
1925–26	20,248
1926–27	15,693
1927–28	16,048

The above expenditure is defrayed from funds provided by Parliament on Civil Estimates, Vote for Colonial and Middle Eastern Services, Class II, 9. There are certain miscellaneous receipts, fees of Court or office fines, etc., totalling a few hundred pounds each year (£792 for 1928) which are now applied in reduction of the Vote on which expenditure is provided for. The expenditure on British services includes, *inter alia*, the personal emoluments of the British staff, Police Force, District Agents, and the provision of transport.

* During 1924, 1925, and 1926 the value of the franc fluctuated considerably, so that the rates 86, 101, and 154 must be regarded as very approximate.

III.—PRODUCTION AND NATURAL RESOURCES.

During the year under review the agricultural development of the Group has continued and new areas have been opened up.

The steady rise in the production of copra has been maintained and an increase of some 2,500 tons is to be noted over the quantity produced during the preceding year. The bulk of the copra is produced on European plantations, and only a quarter of the total could be assigned to purely native production. The prices realised locally were not as favourable as those prevailing during 1927, an average of only £16 per ton being obtained as against £20 for the previous year.

The European markets continue to absorb the whole of the output with the exception of a few hundred tons which go to Australia.

Cocoa is the next most important item of production, but the figures for the year show a decrease in export of 922 tons over that of 1927; while the average price obtainable locally fell short of that realised during 1927 by £5 8*s*. per ton. The decrease in production can be attributed to two severe storms which ravaged the plantations of the northern part of the Group in the early months of the year, and not to any falling off in cultivation.

There has been little change in the production of cotton; a small increase of some 50 tons of the marketable article is observed compared with the output for the previous year. Prices realised during the past few years have not been sufficiently attractive to induce planters to undertake any extensive cultivation, and for the same reason native production has practically ceased.

The bulk of the seed cotton is dealt with locally by four ginning plants established at Vila, Malekula, and Epi (2), respectively. A small quantity is exported to Noumea for treatment, but on account of the extra cost this procedure is not much favoured.

Most of the cotton continues to be exported to France.

A slight falling off is observed with regard to the production of coffee, 96 tons being exported as against 123 tons the previous year.

From the appended table it will be seen that although the total tonnage of exports has increased by 2,378 tons over that of 1927, the total value for 1928 falls short of that realised in the previous year by nearly £52,000.

The British share of the export trade amounts to about 25 per cent. of the total.

The general position at the end of 1928, although somewhat discouraging from the point of view of prices realised, especially for copra, may be considered satisfactory from the view point of agricultural development.

The fertility of the soil in almost every island of the Group enables most tropical agricultural products to be grown very easily. The almost entire absence of disease and pests common to other tropical countries is an important factor in ensuring to the planter the best results. The rainfall is abundant and hurricanes are of rare occurrence, and are usually confined to a small area.

Exports.

Comparative Table in Tons and Sterling.

Produce.	*1924.*		*1925.*		*1926.*		*1927.*		*1928.*	
	Tons.	*Value.* £	*Tons.*	*Value.* £	*Tons.*	*Value.* £	*Tons.*	*Value.* £	*Tons.*	*Value.* £
Copra	6,792	125,652	7,371	162,154	8,382	184,318	10,204	204,090	12,682	208,954
Cocoa	1,517	60,716	1,495	59,808	1,949	87,731	2,344	140,697	1,422	77,685
Cotton	1,420	46,068	*1,015	56,294	*1,420	44,556	†501	40,170	551	43,468
Coffee	281	7,110	287	10,111	274	21,890	123	4,842	96	5,534
Trochas	—	—	112	8,073	85	4,686	86	4,299	61	2,627
Maize	307	1,844	194	1,358	207	1,659	118	949	303	2,277
Sandalwood	94	1,038	22	554	57	1,435	23	384	54	898
Wool	33	10,805	23	6,129	32	7,222	5	601	22	2,453
Cotton seed	—	—	316	541	987	1,467	880	880	1,198	1,210
Miscellaneous	347	7,857	248	2,379	304	19,265	63	1,116	336	975
Totals	10,781	£261,090	11,083	£307,401	13,697	£374,229	14,347	£398,028	16,725	£346,081

* Mixed.

† Ginned.

IV.—TRADE AND ECONOMICS.

The total value of goods imported into the Group during the year under review was £374,797, an increase of £66,857 over 1927. French importers accounted for £305,368, and £69,429 fell to British firms, or slightly over 18 per cent. of the whole.

IMPORT VALUES.

Year.	*British currency.* £		*French currency.* *Francs.*	*Remarks.** Converted at
1924 ...	92,201	or	7,929,327	francs 86=£
1925 ...	217,863	or	22,004,232	francs 101=£
1926 ...	197,840	or	30,457,405	francs 154=£
1927 ...	307,939	or	38,184,562	francs 124=£
1928 ...	374,797	or	46,474,828	francs 124=£

The port of Sydney, New South Wales, supplies generally the necessaries of life, such as flour, sugar, tinned meats, etc.; building material and a certain amount of soft goods are also procured there; wines and spirits in the main are drawn from Europe.

The principal importing firms are (British) Messrs. Burns Philp (South Sea) Company Limited, and Messrs. Gubbay Bros., of Vila; (French) Les Comptoirs Français des Nouvelles Hébrides, Société de Béchade, both of Vila and Santo; La Compagnie Franco-Hebridaise, Vila and Santo, and les Etablissements Hagen of Epi and the Banks Group. Other important companies of the Group are also importers, such as La Société Cotonnière des Nouvelles Hébrides, and La Société Minière et Agricole of Malekula and Santo respectively.

There are six small trading steamers employed in the inter-insular trade, five are under the French flag and one under the British. Each of these steamers is furnished with a well stocked "trade" room, from which the settler may draw his supplies. Produce is usually carried no further than Vila, and there transhipped to the large semi-cargo vessels of the Messageries Maritimes, which touch at Vila six times a year.

There are five important stores in the township of Vila, of which two are British; in addition about a dozen smaller shops are in the hands of Chinese and Japanese traders. Competition is naturally keen, but it is not thought that British trade suffers thereby to any appreciable extent.

The bulk of New Hebrides produce continues to be exported to Europe in French bottoms, the larger share falling to the Messageries Maritimes Company. A few years ago the bulk of the trade was centred in the port of Sydney, New South Wales, but with the advent of the Messageries Maritimes, with the advantages of cheap

* During 1924, 1925, and 1926 the value of the franc fluctuated considerably so that the rates 86, 101, and 154 must be regarded as very approximate.

freights and direct communication with Europe, trade with Sydney has gradually been diverted.

Wages and Cost of Living.

The cost of living in Vila, the seat of Government, is more expensive than town life in the United Kingdom. As in most tropical countries the standard of living for reasons of health must be as high as circumstances will permit. In other parts of the Group living is not so expensive. Supplies of fresh meat, fish, eggs, poultry, and fresh vegetables are scarce and in consequence fetch abnormal prices. Vegetables can be grown and thrive well if carefully attended to and provided a sufficient supply of water can be maintained—which is the chief difficulty. Native labour is not easily procurable and in Vila commands 6*s*. per day and food. Domestic servants are usually procured from the outlying islands and are also difficult to obtain. Wages vary from 25*s*. to 30*s*. per month for a female, and 30*s*. to 40*s*. for a male. The New Hebridean does not make a good domestic servant.

Perishable commodities are imported from Australia. A large proportion of tinned provisions are imported direct from Europe.

The following table gives the average prices in 1928 for various foodstuffs :—

Flour	3*d*. per lb.
Butter...	2*s*. 9*d*. per lb.
Sugar	4*d*. per lb.
Potatoes	3*d*. per lb.
Tinned meats	1*s*. 6*d*. to 2*s*. per tin.
Bacon...	3*s*. 3*d*. per lb.
Tea	3*s*. 6*d*. per lb.
Coffee	2*s*. 3*d*. per lb.
Eggs	3*s*. to 4*s*. per dozen.

Fresh milk is difficult to obtain as the supply for sale is limited, but it is usually possible to keep a cow. There are no hotels in Vila or elsewhere in the Group. Wearing apparel has to be imported from Australia or Europe.

V.—COMMUNICATIONS.

Shipping.

Europe.—The Messageries Maritimes line of steamers run a two monthly service of "cargo-mixte" from Vila to Marseilles via Tahiti, Panama, and Martinique. Messrs. Ballande and Company also run three large cargo steamers from Vila to Marseilles several times during the year to ship their own merchandise.

Efate *without* warning and some damage *was* caused to shipping in the harbour and to plantations in the vicinity of Vila. The table below *shows* the rainfall at four stations for the years 1924 to 1928 and the preceding mean quinquennial rainfall. The heaviest rainfall is in the Northern part of the Group.

Year.	Dillons Bay (Erromango). 18·47 S. 169·53 E.	Port-Vila (Efate). 17·44 S. 168·19 E.	Mog Harbour (East Santo). 15·05 S. 167·07 E.	Port Patterson (Vanua Lava, Banks Is.). 13·50 S. 167·34 E.
1924	47·17	77·84	135·78	139·88
1925	61·25	74·56	127·44	128·44
1926	62·34	73·06	133·34	137·50
1927	59·11	74·26	134·41	143·42
1928	47·31	72·03	135·62	142·12
Mean Annual for five years	55·60	74·73	133·32	138·27
Mean, previous five years...	65·97	74·62	106·98	176·73

British Residency,
Vila, New Hebrides,
12th April, 1929.

C. A. Joy,
Resident Commissioner.

(8275-21) *Wt.* 4456—321 300 1929 P. St. G.7/8

XII.—POPULATION.

Non-native.

A statement is appended giving details of the non-native population of the Group.

Description.	British.			French.		
	Adult Males.	Females and Children.	Total.	Adult Males.	Females and Children.	Total.
Nationals	113	92	205	482	297	779
Foreigners opted under Protocol ...	14	9	23	40	23	63
Asiatics opted under Protocol	30	—	30	31	—	31
Protected subjects and citizens ...	—	—	—	3,358	1,982	5,340*
Totals ...	157	101	258	4,111	2,302	6,413

* Includes 40 Javanese, 301 indentured Chinese coolies and 5,106 indentured Tonkinese coolies.

Compared with the figures for 1927 the British population shows an increase of 18, principally Asiatics. French returns show an increase of 108 in Europeans, and 927 in protected subjects, principally Tonkinese coolies.

Native.

A complete census of the Group is not practicable; various estimates of the native population have been made from time to time ranging from 60,000 to 100,000, but it is not thought the number would exceed 50,000. The islands the most thickly populated, together with a rough estimate of their respective population are: Malekula 9,000; Pentecost 7,000; Santo 7,000; Tanna 6,500; Aoba 6,000; Ambrym 5,000; Epi 2,500; and Efate 1,500.

On the islands of Tanna and Tongoa the numbers remain practically stationary, but in general the population of the Group is decreasing.

It is significant that the inhabitants of the two islands on which the population at least is not decreasing are perhaps the keenest traders and the wealthiest natives of the whole Group.

XIII.—METEOROLOGICAL.

A hurricane occurred in the northern part of the Group during March, 1928, and although its area was limited considerable damage was done to some plantations. In April a severe blow occurred on

XI.—LABOUR.

A review of the labour recruiting operations for the year indicates no improvement in the situation so far as the natives of the Group are concerned. The disinclination of the native to enter into lengthy engagements in the service of the settler is as pronounced as ever, and settlers who have no means for augmenting the local supply by importation of exotic labourers experience difficulty in the harvesting of crops and the development of their holdings.

This disinclination on the part of the native is in no way due to the conditions affecting his engagement, but rather to the progress of civilisation within the Group, which has brought within easy reach of the native and with a minimum of effort on his part such luxuries as he may desire, the cost of which a few years ago would have involved weeks or months of arduous toil.

Generally speaking the native of the New Hebrides is comparatively well off, and often the owner of a small coconut plantation which obviates the necessity of working for the white man.

The employment of native labourers under contract is regulated by the provisions of the Protocol of 1914. In addition British settlers are bound by King's Regulations Nos. 1 of 1913 and 10 of 1926. These instruments provide adequate safeguards both for employer and employee. The British and French District Agents stationed throughout the Group are charged with the supervision of all native labour, and reports on their operations are rendered periodically to their respective Resident Commissioners.

With the agricultural development of the Group the supply of labour from local sources was found insufficient to meet the requirements of an increasing number of settlers, and means were sought for augmenting the supply. In the case of the French the question was solved in 1921 by the introduction of Indo-Chinese coolies under contract, and the movement has continued ever since. At the end of 1928 there were approximately 5,500 Tonkinese labourers under contract to French settlers, some 1,200 having been introduced during the year. The Tonkinese makes a good plantation hand, and generally speaking, after he is once accustomed to plantation work, is preferred to the native.

British settlers are still dependent on local sources for working their plantations, but the supply is not equal to their needs.

Apart from labour under contract, numbers of natives in the vicinity of plantations find employment as casual labourers in work from day to day, an appreciable but unreliable supplement to the numbers recruited.

Dysentery is decreasing owing to rational and immediate treatment of those affected by the disease. Hookworm (ankylostomiasis) receives attention as soon as its presence is discovered. During the forthcoming year a campaign is to be commenced against hookworm and yaws from which diseases the natives suffer.

It can now be said that the New Hebrides, which has not hitherto had a reputation for salubrity, is steadily improving.

IX.—EDUCATION.

There are no schools controlled or supported by the Condominium Government; nor are there any schools in the Group where it is possible for children to receive anything but a primary education not of a very high standard. Parents who can afford to do so are obliged to send their children to Noumea or Sydney.

The town of Vila has three schools, (1) a girls' school, supported and controlled by the Sisters of the Sacred Heart Mission; (2) a school for boys, in charge of the Marist Mission, the cost of which is met from Mission funds; and (3) an infants' school entirely supported and controlled by the French Government. School fees are purely nominal, and admission is not restricted to children of European parentage.

Various schools and training institutions for the benefit of the natives are maintained by the different Missions in the Group. The most important are centred at Tangoa, Santo; Lolowai, Aoba; Aore; and at Vila, under the auspices of the Presbyterian, Melanesian, Seventh Day Adventist, and Marist Mission, respectively.

X.—LANDS AND SURVEY.

The Joint Court, which is also a land Court, commenced the grant of indefeasible titles to land during May, 1928. Up to the end of December 22 titles were granted. The number of claims to ownership exceed 1,000 and cover an approximate area of 2,150,000 acres. The work of the Court in connection with the grant of titles is hampered owing to the difficulty of checking and making surveys. A staff of surveyors is attached to the Court. In the grant of land titles due consideration is given to the requirements of the natives and when necessary reserves are set aside for them. An official Native Advocate is appointed by the two Governments to assist the natives in connection with land claims.

The titles granted up to the end of 1928 were all in respect of the island of Efate.

All these institutions are open to white residents, Asiatics, and natives and do excellent work. The statistics for 1928 in respect of the British and French hospitals at Vila are given below :—

Cases Treated.	British Hospital.		French Hospital.		Total.
	Europeans.	Natives and Asiatics.	Europeans.	Natives and Asiatics.	
"In" Patients ...	30	450	177	2,672	3,169
"Out" Patients ...	—	439	890	9,628	10,957
Totals	30	889	1,067	12,300	14,126
Deaths	—	14	12	86	112

Sanitation.

There are no modern systems of sanitation in the New Hebrides. Supplies of rain water for domestic purposes are collected in large galvanised iron tanks let off by pipes from the roofs of dwelling houses. Refuse is disposed of by burying or burning, or if near the coast by emptying rubbish into the sea at a suitable distance from the shore. Most Europeans employ the pit system of latrine, but in nearly all the houses occupied by Government officials, septic tanks have been installed and with reasonable care have proved very satisfactory. In and around the town of Vila areas of bush are cleared from time to time to prevent the breeding of mosquitoes. A quarantine station for Europeans, Natives and Asiatics is about to be erected at Vila.

Report of Condominium Medical Officer for 1928.

For the year 1928 public health in the New Hebrides has been comparatively good. Apart from a small epidemic of measles on Tanna no other epidemics occurred. Cases of influenza were few. Two significant incidents which occurred were the explosion at Ballandes store which resulted in the death of nine Europeans, and the vegetable poisoning of a number of natives on the small island of Mélé near Vila. The only diseases which attack Europeans are fever, dysentery, and hookworm. Fever is endemic in the New Hebrides, but the measures which have already been taken and which it is proposed to take, as much from a sanitary standpoint as in the prosecution of the struggle against mosquitoes, will give to the New Hebrides, and above all Port Vila, a salubrity which should compare favourably with that of the neighbouring islands.

commencing in November and ending in April, and the dry season from May to October. The wet season is the more unhealthy and epidemic diseases are then more common. The mean temperature of the island of Efate is 77° F., ranging from 63° F. to 89° F. The southern islands of the Group are cooler and healthier than the northern islands—the latter being about 7° warmer on the average. Provided that care ful attention is paid to the conditions of general living, sufficient exercise taken and moderation in habits observed, a satisfactory state of health may be maintained. It is, however, very desirable that a visit should be taken to a temperate climate every two or three years, especially in the case of women and children.

Diseases.

Malaria is the principal disease and all white residents who make a prolonged stay in the Group are likely to suffer from it sooner or later. The use of quinine as a prophylactic is recommended by many medical authorities. Amoebic dysentery is endemic throughout the year and epidemic during the rainy season. Beyond these two diseases there are no others to which the European is specially liable, but cases of blackwater fever occasionally occur. The indigenous population suffer principally from yaws, malaria, ankylostomiasis (hookworm), and dysentery. The various hospitals and doctors in the Group, both Government and Missionary, treat the natives for these complaints. In January, 1929, the Condominium Government in conjunction with the Rockefeller Foundation propose to commence a four years medical campaign throughout the Group for the treatment of yaws and hookworm.

Hospitals.

The following hospitals and medical aid posts are to be found :—

Twana.—A well equipped hospital run by the Presbyterian Mission and subsidised by the British Government.

Efate.—Two well equipped hospitals at Vila ; the John G. Paton Memorial hospital administered by the Presbyterian Mission and subsidised by the British Government, and the French Government hospital.

Epi.—A Medical Aid Post in charge of an Anmamite Medical Practitioner.

Malekula.—A hospital at Norsup run by private enterprise (Compagnie Cotonnière), and a Medical Aid Post at Port Sandwich in charge of an Annamite Medical Practitioner.

Santo.—A French Government hospital at the Segond Channel, recently extended and enlarged.

Prisons.

Each Government maintains its own national prison which is situated in the town of Vila, and accommodation is provided for both natives and whites. The cost of maintenance of prisoners sentenced by the national tribunals is met from national funds, and that of natives sentenced by the Resident Commissioners and the native and mixed Courts, from Condominium funds.

There is no Condominium prison staff. Each Commandant acts as prison keeper and is responsible for the supervision of prisoners placed in his charge. He is assisted by police constables who act as warders.

In addition to the national prisons at headquarters, each District Agency is provided with a temporary lock-up in which natives under short sentences are confined.

Native prisoners are employed in works of general utility, such as the making and cleaning of roads, weeding Government paddocks, transport of material to various Government buildings, etc.

The daily average of native prisoners confined in the British prison was 4.93 and that of the French prison 5.49. No deaths among prisoners were recorded during the year, and, apart from the usual spells of malaria and dysentery, there was no sickness to record, and the health of prisoners was good.

VII.—PUBLIC WORKS.

Owing to the scarcity of skilled artisans in the new Hebrides the carrying out of public works is accomplished only with difficulty. The building of Government houses is carried out by importing ready-made cut houses from Australia, the erection and preparation of sites being done by local contract assisted by the Works Department. Road work is also done by contract with local planters. The Works Department consists of a Superintendent and an Assistant; casual labour is engaged as required, there being no permanent staff of artisans. The amount expended on Public Works—Annually Recurrent and Extraordinary—for 1928 amounted to approximately £11,704. Of this sum £1,776 was spent on roads and bridges and the balance on the erection of houses and general repairs to buildings.

VIII.—PUBLIC HEALTH.

Climate.

The New Hebrides is classed as unhealthy. The climate although very enervating is not, however, worse than that of many other tropical places. The year is marked by two seasons, the wet season

the exception of those cases reserved to the Joint Court. Native Courts have Civil jurisdiction in cases where natives alone are concerned and penal jurisdiction over offences peculiar to natives or committed by natives against natives.

(4) and (5) *National Courts.*—The British and French Governments have established in the Group, in conformity with their existing legal systems Courts with jurisdiction over all civil cases, other than those reserved to the Joint Court, and over all criminal cases in which a non-native is the defendant. In civil cases the jurisdiction over actions between non-natives belongs in some cases to the Court of the Power under whose law the contract was concluded or the act or thing in question originated, and in other cases to the Court of the Power to which the defendant belongs. In criminal cases, non-natives are justiciable by the Court of their own nationality or the nationality applied to them.

There were no serious cases of crime during the year under report. In 1928 the Joint Court delivered 25 Judgments concerning breaches of Joint Regulations and of the Protocol of 1914.

Police.

The policing of the Group is carried out by two separate forces of Armed Native Constabulary, British and French, each in charge of a National Commandant under the orders of the respective Resident Commissioner. The headquarters are at Vila; small detachments are located at each of the District Agencies on the islands of Tanna, Malekula, and Santo, respectively, in order to assist the District Agents in the carrying out of their duties.

The British force is composed of natives recruited from the islands of the New Hebrides, and the French force partly of New Hebrideans and Loyalty Islanders. In addition the French have enrolled a number of Tonkinese police for the purpose of facilitating police operations among the Tonkinese coolies in the Group.

The duties of the native Constabulary consist in the maintenance of law and order among the native population of the more civilised areas, general police and patrol work, the guarding of native prisoners, and the repression of native disorders.

Both the British and French Commandants in addition to their duties as police officers to the Condominium, also act as police officers in so far as their own nationals are concerned, and are charged with the conduct of police cases before their respective national Courts.

The cost of the maintenance of the two forces is defrayed by the respective national Governments, except when the two corps are acting jointly, when the expenses are met from Condominium funds.

stations as their share of the charges. A table is given below showing statistics for the year under report.

Messages.	Received.	Despatched.	Total.
Government messages ...	967	864	1,831
Other messages	4,269	4,449	8,738
Totals	5,236	5,313	10,569

Telephones.

Telephone communication is limited to Port Vila and the outlying districts of the town. The system is operated by a central exchange. There are 34 telephones and 72 miles of wire. Owing to local weather conditions the system is difficult to maintain efficiently.

VI.—JUSTICE, POLICE, AND PRISONS.

Justice.

There are five Courts of Justice in the New Hebrides. Their respective constitutions and jurisdictions are defined by the Convention of 1914. The relative provisions of this Convention do not admit of accurate summary, but the following paragraphs will serve to give a rough idea of the scope and functions of these Courts.

(1) Joint Court.—The Court is composed of a British and a French Judge presided over by a Judge of neutral nationality. There is also a Public Prosecutor and a Native Advocate. The Joint Court is a court of final adjudication. Broadly speaking and subject to exceptions, its civil jurisdiction is confined to certain proceedings in respect of rights over immovable property and to cases brought before it by common consent of the parties, whether native or non-native, and its criminal jurisdiction to offences or crimes (a) connected with the recruitment of native labourers or (b) committed by natives against non-natives or (c) committed by natives against natives and involving a greater penalty than one year's confinement.

There is an appeal to the Joint Court from all judgments of a Court of First Instance and from important judgments of a Native Court.

(2) Courts of First Instance.—These are composed of a British and a French District Agent, and a British or French Assessor chosen by lot. Their jurisdiction is over breaches of the 1914 Convention (or of Joint Regulations made thereunder) except those concerning the recruitment and engagement of native labour.

(3) Native Courts.—These are composed of either a British or French District Agent, assisted by two Native Assessors. With

Whitesands to Lenakel (vide sketch map) without difficulty. There are no roads into the interior of any of the other islands.

Railways.

There are no railways proper in the Group. In Vila some of the small wharves have two-foot rail tracks to transport merchandise to the bulk store sheds, and there is a similar track which runs from Vila to the outskirts of Mele which is used for various commercial purposes.

Posts.

Regular mail communication from Europe and elsewhere is maintained by the subsidised mail steamers S.S. Makambo and S.S. La Perouse which visit the Group every five to six weeks. Most of the mails are landed at Vila and sorted and distributed through the Group by the island steamers, as the mail steamers only touch at a few places in the Group. There is no Post Office except at Vila, the collection and distribution of island mails being carried out by selected officers on the vessels concerned who receive an allowance from the Government. The Condominium Government has a postage stamp designed to represent the dual control. The values are inscribed in English and French currency.

The volume of postal matter handled by the Vila Post Office for 1928 was as follows :—

	From, or to, British territory.		From, or to, French territory.		Other places.		Total.
	Received.	Despatched.	Received.	Despatched.	Received.	Despatched.	
Letters ...	24,000	18,000	63,000	41,000	2,500	1,500	150,000
Other articles	48,000	2,500	30,000	5,000	100	—	85,600
Registered articles	600	829	3,803	4,356	125	282	9,995
Totals... ...	72,600	21,329	96,803	50,356	2,725	1,782	245,595

Radio-Telegraph.

There is a Government radio-telegraph station at Vila, worked by a British and a French operator. The bulk of the traffic is with Noumea ; there is a daily service with Suva, Fiji, and communication is obtained from time to time with other stations in the Pacific. The call sign of the Vila station is F J X. The total expenditure on the station for 1928 amounted to £1,875, and the receipts on account of traffic to £587. Of this sum £412 was paid to other

Australia.—The S.S. *Makambo* (Burns Philp line) and the S.S. *La Perouse* (*Messageries Maritimes*) maintain communication *with* Sydney—the former via *Norfolk* Island and Lord Howe, and the latter via *Noumea*, *New* Caledonia.

New Caledonia.—Communication is maintained *with* Noumea by the *Messageries Maritimes* "cargo-mixte" steamers which touch at Vila on the outward bound voyage from *Marseilles*; also by the mail vessel *La Perouse* and at fairly frequent intervals by the French inter-island steamers mentioned below.

Inter-Island.—The following steamers make monthly or five-weekly voyages round the Group, usually connecting with the British or French mail vessels (S.S. *Makambo* and *La Perouse*):—S.S. *Malinee* (Burns Philp South Sea Company), S.S. *St. Andre* and S.S. *St. Michel* (*Messrs.* Comptoirs Français des Nouvelles Hebrides), S.S. *New* Hebrides and S.S. Perrenche (Société de Réchade), S.S. *Kobololo* (Etablissements Hagen).

The port of Vila is at present the only port of entry in the Group. The tonnage entered and cleared during 1928 totalled as follows:—

ENTERED.

		Tons.	
British	... ...	8,702	(19 vessels).
French	... ...	107,969	(49 vessels).
Total	... ...	116,671	

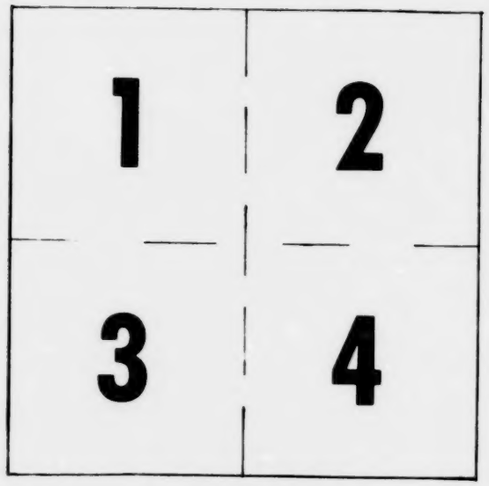
CLEARED.

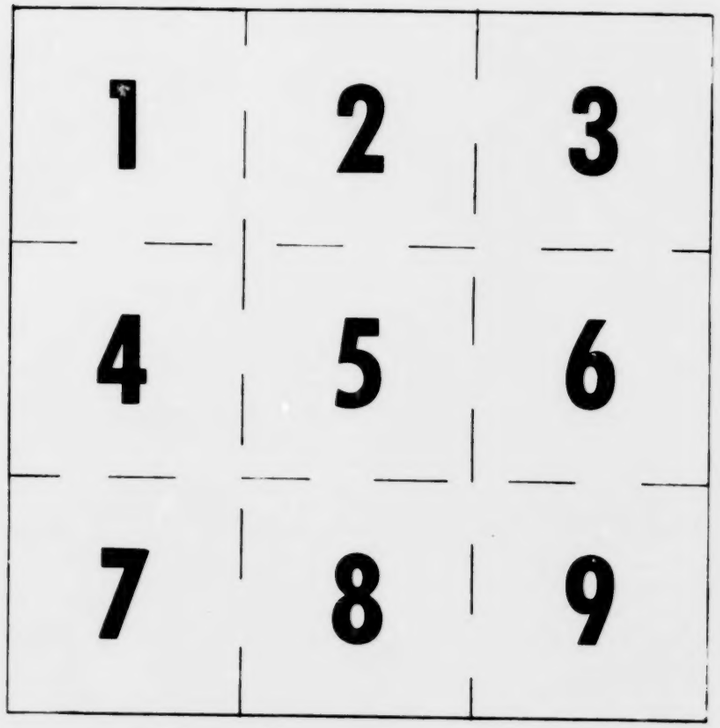
British	... ...	8,685	(16 vessels).
French	... ...	107,557	(46 vessels).
Total	... ...	116,242	

Roads.

There are a number of fairly good roads in and around the town of Vila, but only a few extend to any distance beyond the town. Improvements have been made during the year under report, and most of the roads in the capital are now capable of taking motor traffic. Road construction is at present carried out by contracts with local planters. In the other islands of the group, with the exception of Tanna, there are few roads, which in most cases are unsuitable for wheeled traffic except for short distances. The difficulty of procuring labour and the high wages demanded by skilled artisans make road construction a problem. On the island of Tanna there are several good roads and it is possible to cross from

Maps on this order too large to be entirely included in one exposure are filmed clockwise beginning in the upper left hand corner, left to right and top to bottom as many frames as required. The following diagrams illustrate the method.





NEW HEBRIDES GROUP

(Compiled from British & French Admiralty Charts.)

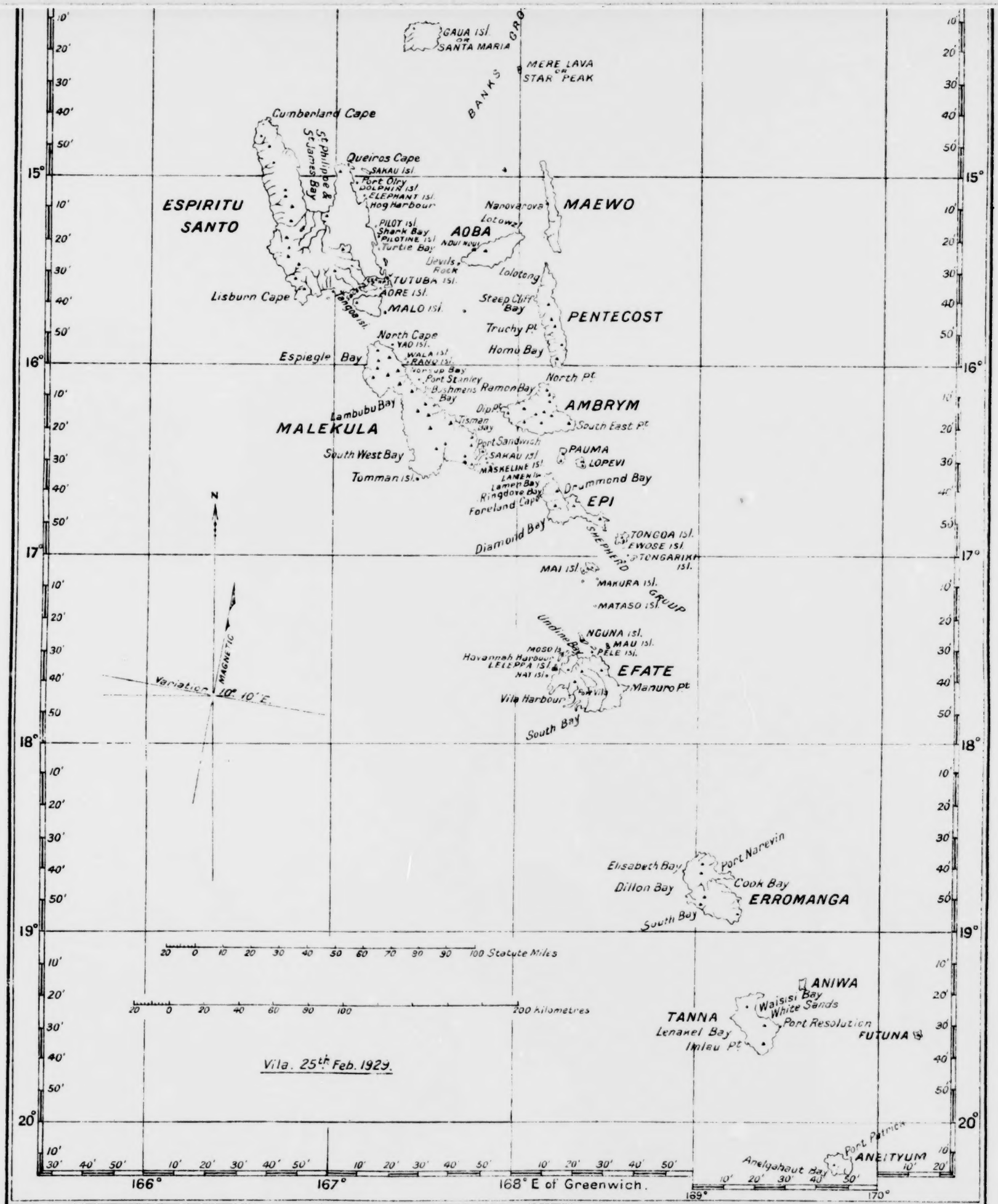
166° 167° 168° 169° 170°

14° LAT. South 15° 16° 17°

TORRES GROUP
HIU ISL.
TEGUA ISL.
LO ISL.
TOGA ISL.
UREPARAPARA ISL.
SADDLE ISL.
VANUA LAVA
Port Patteson
SUGAR LOAF
GAUA ISL. OR SANTA MARIA
BANKS GROUP
MERE LAVA
STAR OR PEAK
Cumberland Cape
St. Philippe & St. Jamess Bay
Queiros Cape
SAKAU ISL.
Port Olry
DOLPHIN ISL.
ELEPHANT ISL.
Hog Harbour
ESPIRITU SANTO
PILOT ISL.
Shark Bay
PILOTINE ISL.
Turtle Bay
Nanovarova
Lotowzi
MAEWO
AOBA
NDUI NDUI
Devils Rock
Lolotong
TUTUBA ISL.
AORE ISL.
Lisburn Cape
Tonga ISL.
MALO ISL.
Steep Cliff Bay
PENTECOST
Truchy Pt.
North Cape
YAO ISL.
WALA ISL.
RANU ISL.
Espiegle Bay
Homo Bay
North Pt.
Port Stanley
Bushmens Bay
Ramon Bay
AMBRYM
Lambubu Bay
Dip Pt.
Tisman Bay
South East Pt.
MALEKULA
Port Sandwich
South West Bay
SAKAU ISL.
PAUMA
LOPEVI
MASKELINE ISL.
LAMEN Is.
Tomman ISL.
Lamen Bay
Drummond Bay
Ringdove Bay
Foreland Cape
EPI
Diamond Bay
SHEPHERD GROUP
TONGOA ISL.
EWOSE ISL.
TONGARIKI ISL.
MAI ISL.
MAKURA ISL.
MATASO ISL.
Undine Bay
NGUNA ISL.
MAU ISL.
PELE ISL.
MOSO Is.
Havannah Harbour
LELEPPA ISL.
NAT ISL.
EFATE
Manuro Pt.
Vila Harbour
Sarvile

N

Variation MAGNETIC 10° 10' E.



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No. 1483.

NEW HEBRIDES.

REPORT FOR 1929.

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NEW HEBRIDES.

REPORT FOR THE YEAR 1929.

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I.—GENERAL.

History.

The New Hebrides lie between the 12th and 20th degrees of South latitude, and the 165th and 170th degrees of East longitude, and are of an area of roughly 5,700 square miles. The principal port of the Group and the seat of Government is the township of Vila, on the island of Efate, in the southern part of the Group and about 5 or 6 days' steam from Sydney, New South Wales.

Santo, the largest and one of the northernmost islands of the Group, was discovered by Quiros in 1606, who touched at the Bay of St. Phillip and St. James (Big Bay). Under the impression that he had located the long-sought Southern Continent he named it "Tierra Australis del Expiritu Santo," and it is recorded that a

settlement was established at the River Jordan, but was later abandoned on account of sickness and dissensions with the natives.

Nothing further was heard of the Group until the year 1768, when Cook touched at various points and, in the year 1774, charted and named most of the larger islands.

At about the same period of Cook's discoveries the French navigator, Bougainville, sailed between the islands of Santo and Malekula thereby disproving Quiros' theory as to the existence of the great Southern Continent. The strait through which he passed still bears his name.

In 1788 the French Government expedition under La Perouse is supposed to have visited these islands, but came to an untimely end at Vanikoro, in the Santa Cruz Group, a little to the north of the New Hebrides.

The Banks Group, forming part of the Northern New Hebrides, was sighted by Bligh in 1793.

D'Entrecasteau, Dumont d'Urville, Belcher, Markham, and others, are among the early voyagers whose accounts of these islands are of interest.

The New Hebrides for many years was practically a "no man's land," and a favourite hunting ground for recruiting vessels, but, in the year 1887, a Joint Naval Commission was appointed, charged with the protection of the lives and property of the subjects of the two nations—France and England—in the islands. The Commission was composed of two officers from each of the English and French warships in these waters and was presided over alternately by the British and French Commanders.

In 1895 an Arbitration Court was formed by the colonists, but the Joint Naval Commission pronounced its veto and the Court was dissolved.

In 1902 the first British Resident Commissioner was appointed, the French Government having a short time previously appointed a similar official.

Geography.

The islands of the New Hebrides, with which are included the Banks and Torres Groups, form an incomplete double chain stretching in a north-north-west direction for a length of 550 miles and consist of about 80 islands. Santo is the largest with an area of approximately 1,500 square miles and a coastline of over 200 miles. Of the smaller islands there are about 18 averaging a little over 5 square miles. The larger islands are high (highest point 6,169 feet) and show extensive exposures of volcanic rocks underlying areas of raised coral

terraces, which latter reach in some cases an elevation of quite 2,000 feet. The smaller islands are often wholly volcanic. There are three principal volcanoes in the Group, which are usually active, situated on the islands of Tanna, Lopevi, and Ambrym. Santo contains numerous small rivers, only navigable, however, to minor craft.

The Group has three good harbours. Vila, Efate, the headquarters of the Administration, lies on one of these harbours. It is a small town built on the surrounding hills, which extend to the beach, on which are to be found the principal business houses.

Languages.

The European languages spoken in the Group are English and French. There is no unification of the native language ; each island speaks a different tongue, and there are many different dialects in the same island. The lingua franca is pidgin-English.

Currency, etc.

English and French currencies are legal tender in the Group, and British and French systems of weights and measures are in use.

General.

By the Convention of 20th October, 1906, a Condominium was set up with a Joint Court composed of British and French Judges and a neutral President ; and an executive Government consisting, for some purposes, of the British and French representatives in the Group acting in concert. For other purposes British and French nationals remain subject to the control only of their national authorities. The Convention of 20th October, 1906, has been superseded by a convention of 6th August, 1914, which was ratified in March, 1922.

The British and French Resident Commissioners are subordinate to the High Commissioner for the Western Pacific and the High Commissioner at Noumea respectively.

The year was marked by a serious volcanic eruption of Mount Benbow, on the island of Ambrym, which occurred on the 28th June. The main lava flows proceeded in a westerly and south-westerly direction for a distance of approximately twelve miles, where they entered the sea ; two subsidiary flows worked along the coast for a distance of three miles—practically forming a triangle with Mount Benbow as the apex. At places the lava flow was a mile in width.

About five hundred natives were forced to evacuate the island. Most of them were taken to Port Sandwich on the coast of Malekula and were temporarily housed and fed by the Joint Administration, missionaries, and traders, and various native villages along the coast

The eruption terminated on the 30th June. Considerable damage was done to native villages and gardens and some damage to European property in the vicinity of the lava flows. The majority of the evacuated natives returned to Ambrym some weeks after the eruption had subsided and settled in various villages which had escaped destruction. There were no serious European casualties and few native casualties. The last occasion on which Mount Benbow erupted was in 1913.

During July the French cruiser "Tourville" (Capitaine Abrial) visited the Group and stayed at Vila for four days. During September the cruiser H.M.A.S. "Australia" (Rear Admiral Evans) also visited Vila, remaining for six days.

II.—FINANCE.

By Article 5 of the Convention of 1914 each of the two Powers is required to defray the expenses of its own administration in the Group. The expenses of the joint services are defrayed out of local taxation. The joint services include the Posts and Telegraphs, Customs, Public Works, Port and Harbour, Treasury, Medical Service, Joint Court, Summary Courts, and the Land Registry. In the event of revenue from local taxation proving insufficient to meet expenditure, the two signatory Powers are bound to contribute to the deficit in equal proportions. No such contribution has been required since the year 1921.

The stabilising of the franc during the latter part of 1928 had a beneficial effect on local finance during the year under report. Under the Convention, both English and French currency are legal tender in the Group, but, during the period of fluctuation of the franc, payment in British currency was not favoured by French commercial undertakings. This has now adjusted itself, and British currency is more in evidence than during the preceding years. The bulk of the revenue of the Condominium is received in French currency.

There are no banks in the New Hebrides. The French commercial houses carry out their banking business with the Banque de l'Indo-Chine in Noumea, New Caledonia, and the British with banks in Australia. Most of the commercial houses act as banks for their clients within the Group. The Joint Administration maintains a bank account in Noumea and in Australia, and controls the necessary ratio of sterling currency required for administrative purposes. The Banque de l'Indo-Chine has a local note issue, which facilitates financial transactions within the Group. Very little French coinage is seen in the Group, but British silver is fairly plentiful. For local purposes the exchange rate of 124 francs to the £ sterling has been adopted throughout the Group.

Revenue and Expenditure.

Condominium Revenue.

Year.	*French currency.*		*British currency.*	*Remarks.**
	Francs.		£	*Converted at*
1925	1,420,714	or	14,066	francs 101=£
1926	1,777,199	or	11,540	francs 154=£
1927	3,037,711	or	24,497	francs 124=£
1928	3,463,551	or	27,932	francs 124=£
1929†	3,618,073	or	29,178	francs 124=£

Condominium Expenditure.

Year.	*French currency.*		*British currency.*	*Remarks.**
	Francs.		£	*Converted at*
1925	2,508,212	or	24,833	francs 101=£
1926	1,217,599	or	7,906	francs 154=£
1927	2,220,479	or	17,907	francs 124=£
1928	3,568,404	or	28,777	francs 124=£
1929†	3,196,439	or	25,777	francs 124=£

Over four-fifths of the Condominium revenue is derived from import and export dues and the balance from Post Office and telegraph receipts, court fees and fines, port dues, trading licenses, and miscellaneous receipts. The bulk of the imports are subject to a 6 per cent. *ad valorem* duty and the exports a 1 per cent. *ad valorem* duty. Other import duties are 12 per cent. *ad valorem* in spirits and tobacco and 20 per cent. *ad valorem* on lace, perfumery, and fancy goods. The customs duties are set out in Joint Regulations Nos. 2 and 3 of 1927.

Expenditure on Services Entirely British.

	£
1925–26	20,248
1926–27	15,693
1927–28	16,048
1928–29	11,966

The above expenditure is defrayed from funds provided by Parliament on Civil Estimates, Vote for Colonial and Middle Eastern Services Class II, 9. Certain miscellaneous receipts, such as court fees, rent, etc., totalling usually a few hundred pounds each year (£1,482 for 1929), are now applied in reduction of the Vote on which expenditure is provided for. The expenditure on British services includes, among other things, the personal emoluments of the British national staff, Police Force, and the District Agents.

* During 1925 and 1926 the value of the franc fluctuated considerably so that the rates 101 and 154 must be regarded as approximate.

† Partly estimated.

III.—PRODUCTION AND NATURAL RESOURCES.

The year 1929 has not shown the customary increase in production as compared with preceding years. The table of exports shows an apparent decrease of 1,972 tons of produce, but this was due to the fact that towards the end of 1929 there were no facilities for shipping produce. Nevertheless it may be accepted that production for 1929 does not show any substantial increase on 1928. The cause may be partially assigned to local hurricanes, which occurred in the northern and southern islands of the Group in the first half of the year, and to the fact that some of the large companies operating in the group have been concentrating on improving their properties rather than increasing their output.

Copra, the principal product exported, shows a decrease of 1,895 tons. Of the total amount produced, viz. :—10,787 tons, roughly a quarter can be assigned to native production, the bulk being produced on European plantations. The British export of copra for 1929 was 33 per cent. of the whole. The prices realized for this commodity showed a marked decline, the average price for the year being £13 10s. per ton, as compared with £16 for 1928, and £20 for 1927. Practically the whole of the copra produced is shipped direct to Europe.

Cocoa showed an increase of 625 tons, but the average price obtainable locally was only £43 per ton as against £55 for the preceding year. Coffee and cotton remain at approximately the same figure for 1928, but the prices obtainable were 2d. per lb. less than that year. It seems likely that cotton and coffee will be more extensively cultivated in the near future, but the present low market prices being realized for these commodities have not acted as an incentive to increased production. Most of the seed cotton is ginned locally and exported to Europe.

There is an increase of 200 tons in the production of maize. This was caused by a sudden demand for maize in New Caledonia, but the market proved to be but temporary and it is unlikely that maize will be extensively cultivated, owing to lack of markets, although it is easily produced in the New Hebrides.

It will be noted from the appended table that the value of exports, as compared with the previous year, shows a decrease of £59,849. This is due to the low prices which have prevailed generally for all kinds of agricultural products and is not the result of any substantial difference in production or quality.

The position generally at the close of 1929, though discouraging from the viewpoint of market prices, is not unsatisfactory in so far as agricultural development is concerned, and there are indications of a substantial increase in agricultural production in the near future. The British share of the export trade remains at approximately 25 per cent. as in previous years.

EXPORTS.

Comparative Table in Tons and Sterling.

Produce.	*1925.*		*1926.*		*1927.*		*1928.*		*1929.*	
	Tons.	*Value.* £	*Tons.*	*Value.* £	*Tons.*	*Value.* £	*Tons.*	*Value.* £	*Tons.*	*Value.* £
Copra	7,371	162,154	8,382	184,318	10,204	204,090	12,682	208,954	10,787	147,460
Cocoa	1,495	59,808	1,949	87,731	2,344	140,697	1,422	77,685	2,047	89,088
Cotton	*1,015	56,294	*1,420	44,556	†501	40,170	551	43,468	329	31,700
Coffee	287	10,111	274	21,890	123	4,842	96	5,534	100	6,530
Trochas	112	8,073	85	4,686	86	4,299	61	2,627	57	2,980
Maize	194	1,358	207	1,659	118	949	303	2,277	482	4,355
Sandalwood	22	554	57	1,435	23	384	54	898	49	957
Wool	23	6,129	32	7,222	5	601	22	2,453	8	963
Cotton seed	316	541	987	1,467	880	880	1,198	1,210	657	1,060
Miscellaneous	248	2,379	304	19,265	63	1,116	336	975	237	1,139
Totals	11,083	£307,401	13,697	£374,229	14,347	£398,028	16,725	£346,081	14,753	£286,232

* Mixed.

† Ginned.

IV.—TRADE AND ECONOMICS.

Import values fell from £374,797 in 1928 to £300,035 in 1929, which is a corollary to the decrease in export values. French importers accounted for £242,828 and British £57,207, or about 19 per cent. of the whole.

Import Values.

Year.	*British currency.* £	*French currency.* *Francs.*	*Remarks.** *Converted at*
1924	92,201	7,929,327	francs 86=£
1925	217,863	22,004,232	francs 101=£
1926	197,840	30,457,405	francs 154=£
1927	307,939	38,184,562	francs 124=£
1928	374,797	46,474,828	francs 124=£
1929	300,035	37,204,343	francs 124=£

Chief Imports for 1929.

	Quantity.	*Value.* £
Beer (cases of 24 bottles) ...	1,902	2,594
Spirits ,, 12 ,, ...	6,547	7,170
Fine Wines (cases of 12 bottles)...	5,417	6,300
Light Wines (barrels of 220 litres)	1,122	7,100
Petrol (gallons)	80,288	7,930
Lubricating Oil (gallons) ...	16,392	2,725
Paraffin (gallons)	83,392	6,670
Cigarettes	1,941,800	1,600
Tobacco (kilos)	25,274	10,796
Cement (bags of 180 kilos) ...	5,608	2,930
Salad Oil (cases of 12 bottles) ...	716	1,162
Rice (sacks)	29,688	31,110
Sugar (sacks 30 kilos)	7,153	4,700
Tinned Fish (cases)	6,038	6,600
Tinned Food (cases)	9,537	20,480
Flour (sacks)	11,043	8,580
Gunny Bags (bales)	1,178	10,267
Motor Cars...	11	2,176
Building Materials	—	2,900
Tinned Milk (cases 48 tins) ...	1,548	2,160
Biscuits (various)	—	4,592
Agricultural Machinery	—	4,186

Imports of British origin are small by comparison with others.

Beers are mostly German or Dutch, wines practically all French, and spirits British.

* During 1925 and 1926 the value of the franc fluctuated considerably so that the rates 101 and 154 must be regarded as approximate.

Tinned foods are nearly all American, some small portion being French and Australian. Tinned fish is mostly American, Canadian, French, and Portuguese. Tinned milks are mostly Swiss. America sends most of the lubricating oil, petrol, and kerosene. Flour is almost wholly Australian. Timber for boat building originates in Australasia for the most part, while softer kinds are nearly all brought in from America. Rice emanates from the Eastern Pacific as a general rule, while about 90 per cent. of the sugar comes from Java, about 10 per cent. coming from Martinique. The greater part of the tobacco and cigarettes are of French manufacture, the smaller portion of finer quality being mostly British. Biscuits are about equally divided between British and French. Motor cars are French and American. Most of the gunny bags are imported from Calcutta.

Sydney, New South Wales, is the chief local port of supply of general necessities of life. A considerable quantity of imports, including most wines and spirits, come, however, direct from Europe in French steamers. Oils, petrol, and some tinned foods are transhipped in Noumea from America.

The principal importing firms are : (British) Messrs. Burns Philp (South Sea) Co., Ltd., of Vila ; (French) Les Comptoirs Français des Nouvelles Hébrides, Société de Béchade—both of Vila and Santo ; La Compagnie Franco-Hébridaise, Vila and Santo ; Les Etablissements Hagen of Epi, and the Banks Group ; and Messrs. Gubbay Frères of Vila. Other important Companies of the Group are also importers, such as La Société Cotonnière des Nouvelles Hébrides, and La Société Minière et Agricole of Malekula and Santo respectively.

There are six small trading steamers employed in the inter-insular trade, of which five are under the French flag and one under the British. Each carries a well stocked " trade " room, from which the settler may draw his supplies. Produce is mostly carried to Vila where it is transhipped to vessels of the Messageries Maritimes and other French and Dutch lines for shipment direct to Europe ; though a small quantity, chiefly cocoa, is shipped to Australia.

There are five important stores in the township of Vila, one of which is British ; in addition, about a dozen small shops are in the hands of Chinese and Japanese traders.

Wages and Cost of Living.

The standard of living, which in the interests of health it is necessary to maintain in the New Hebrides, must be as high as circumstances permit. At Vila, the seat of Government, living is fairly expensive, as there are few facilities for the individual to maintain gardens or keep livestock. In other parts of the Group living is much less expensive, as there are facilities for so doing. Supplies of fresh meat, fish, eggs, and poultry, and from time to

time fresh vegetables, are obtainable in Vila, but prices are high. Native labour in Vila commands 5*s*. per day and food. Domestic servants are difficult to obtain and it is invariably necessary to train them in domestic duties. Wages for servants vary from 25*s*. to 30*s*. per month for a female, and 30*s*. to 40*s*. for a male. The New Hebridean does not like working as a domestic for long periods; twelve months is usually the maximum period he or she will serve.

There are no hotels in the Group, but at Vila it is sometimes possible to obtain board and lodging at a French hostelry.

The following table gives the average prices for foodstuffs, etc., during the year under report :—

Flour	3*d*. per lb.
Sugar	4*d*. ,,
Potatoes	4*d*. ,,
Fresh Meat	7*d*. ,,
Onions	3*d*. ,,
Butter	2*s*. 11*d*. per lb.
Tea	3*s*. 6*d*. ,,
Coffee	3*s*. ,,
Eggs	3*s*. to 4*s*. per dozen.
Poultry	5*s*. to 7*s* each.
Tinned Meat	1*s*. 6*d*. per tin.
Wood fuel	5*s*. per meter.
Kerosene	10*s*. per tin (4 gallons.)

Fresh milk is obtainable at Vila, but the supply is limited. Underwear can sometimes be purchased locally, but it is usually necessary to obtain all wearing apparel from Australia or Europe. Practically all perishable commodities are imported from Australia.

V.—COMMUNICATIONS.

Shipping.

Europe.—The following vessels of the Messageries Maritimes line maintain a two-monthly service between the terminal ports of Dunkirk and Noumea (New Caledonia) and call at Vila on both inward and outward voyages: S.S. "Andromede," "Ville de Verdun," "Ville de Strasbourg" and S.S. "Antinous." The route is via Tahiti, Panama, Martinique, and Marseilles, and the period of the voyage approximately sixty-five days from Vila. Messrs. Ballande and Company also run three large cargo steamers, with limited passenger accommodation, from Vila to Marseilles, via the Dutch East Indies, several times during the year to ship their own merchandise.

Australia.—The S.S. "Makambo" (Burns Philp line) and the S.S. "La Perouse" (Messageries Maritimes) maintain five-weekly communication with Sydney, New South Wales—the former via

Norfolk and Lord Howe Islands, and the latter via Noumea, New Caledonia.

New Caledonia.—Communication is maintained with Noumea by the S.S. " La Perouse " every four to five weeks, and by the Messageries lines of steamers previously mentioned, approximately every two months. The French inter-island steamers also pay fairly frequent visits to Noumea.

Inter-Island.—The following steamers make monthly or five-weekly voyages round the Group. They have no fixed itinerary, but usually connect at Vila with the British and French mail vessels.

S.S. " Malinoa " (Burns Philp, South Sea, Company), S.S. " St. André " and S.S. " St. Michel " (Messrs. Comptoirs Français des Nouvelles-Hébrides), S.S. " Néo Hébridais " and S.S. " Pervenche " (Société de Béchade), S.S. " Kobiloko " (Etablissements Hagen), Inter Cruiser " Lolita " (Naturel Frères).

The port of Vila is the port of entry in the Group. The tonnage entered and cleared during 1929 is as follows :—

ENTERED.

	Tons.	
British	16,787	(19 vessels).
French	105,496	(41 vessels).
Other	4,363	(3 vessels).
	126,646	

CLEARED.

British	16,139	(18 vessels).
French	106,076	(43 vessels).
Other	4,363	(3 vessels).
	126,578	

Roads.

During the year under report some improvements have been made to the roads in and around the town Vila. Extensions and improvements to the several main roads, which give access to the outlying districts of the island of Efate, have also been made. The construction of a ford over the river La Colle, which is nearing completion, will give uninterrupted communication between Vila and Devil's Point—a distance of seventeen miles.

The maintenance and construction of roads is usually carried out by contract with local planters, but during the year 1929 the

Administration purchased road machinery and a part of the upkeep and repair of the roads has been done by the Public Works Department.

There are few roads proper in the other islands of the Group, with the exception of Tanna which has several good roads, one of which traverses the island.

The use of motor transport by all sections of the population of Efate has increased the importance of road construction.

Railways.

There are no railways proper in the Group. A two-foot rail track runs from the outskirts of Mélé to Vila—a distance of about four miles—and is used for various commercial purposes. The small wharves, privately owned by the commercial houses in Vila, are also provided with rails for the transport of merchandise from the bulk store sheds.

Posts.

Mail communication from and to Europe and Australasia is maintained by the mail steamers S.S. "Makambo" and S.S. "La Perouse," which call at Vila and various island ports every five weeks. These lines are subsidized by His Majesty's Government in Australia, and the French Government, respectively. The mails both inward and outward are sorted at Vila and rebagged for distribution round the Group by selected officers on the mail and inter-island steamers, who receive an allowance from the Condominium Government for the services performed. The average time taken for European postal matter to reach Vila by the regular mail routes is forty-two to forty-nine days. The Condominium Government has a postage stamp designed to represent the dual control. There are two sets of stamps—one British and one French. Both are inscribed in English and French currency.

The postal matter handled by the Vila Post Office for 1929 was as follows :—

—	*From, or to, British territory.*		*From, or to, French territory.*		*Other places.*		*Total.*
	Received.	*Despatched.*	*Received.*	*Despatched.*	*Received.*	*Despatched.*	
Letters	25,000	19,000	64,000	42,000	3,000	2,000	155,000
Other articles ...	48,000	2,500	35,000	6,000	500	500	92,500
Registered articles	600	700	5,061	5,000	141	182	11,684
Totals ...	73,600	22,200	104,061	53,000	3,641	2,682	259,184

Radio-Telegraph.

There is no cable communication with the New Hebrides, but the Condominium Government maintains a radio-telegraph station at Vila, which is worked by British and French Operators. The call sign is F J X and messages can be received and transmitted on the following wave lengths :—

Receipts	...	...	17 to 30 metres and 600 metres.
Transmissions	...	...	600 and 800 metres.

The greater part of the traffic is with Noumea, New Caledonia ; There is a daily service with Suva, Fiji, and when conditions permit communication is established with other stations in the Pacific. The terminal charge of the Vila station is 3*d*., or 1 franc 50 centimes, per word. The total expenditure on the station for 1929 was £1,266 and the receipts on account of traffic £849. Of this sum £330 was paid to other stations as their share of the charges.

A table is given below showing statistics for the year under report :—

Messages.	*Received.*	*Despatched.*	*Total.*
Government Messages ...	798	890	1,688
Other Messages ...	1,662	1,704	3,366
Totals	2,460	2,594	5,054

The Vila station was built in 1917 and the developments in wireless telegraphy which have taken place since that date have now made it necessary that the station should be modernized. This matter is now receiving attention.

Telephones.

Telephone communication is established in the town of Vila and the outlying districts. The system is operated by a central exchange and the service is continuous. There are 53 telephones and 74 miles of wire. During the hurricane season the service is liable to interruption. There are no telephone systems in the other islands of the Group.

VI.—JUSTICE, POLICE, AND PRISONS.

Justice.

The Convention of 1914 provided for the immediate introduction of three Courts, namely the Joint Court, and the French and British National Courts, and the subsequent formation of two others—Courts of First Instance and Native Courts.

The scope and functions of these Courts is briefly as follows :—

(1) *Joint Court.*—The Court is composed of a British and a French Judge, with a President of neutral nationality. There is also a Public Prosecutor and a Native Advocate. The Joint Court is a Court of final adjudication in matters of a purely Condominium nature. Broadly speaking, and subject to certain exceptions, its civil jurisdiction is confined to certain proceedings in respect of rights over immovable property—its chief function being that of a land Court governing the registration of indefeasible titles to land. It may also settle cases between any parties, native or non-native, brought before it by consent of both. Its criminal jurisdiction, broadly speaking, is confined to offences—(*a*) connected with the recruitment of native labourers or (*b*) committed by natives against non-natives, or (*c*) committed by natives against natives in areas where the Native Code is in force and involving a penalty of over one year's confinement, or (*d*) against the Convention or Joint Regulations passed in pursuance thereof in areas where no Court of First Instance exists.

There is an appeal to the Joint Court from all judgments of Courts of First Instance and from important civil judgments of Native Courts. The Joint Court also has certain revisionary powers in criminal cases of Native Courts, and judgments of Courts of First Instance involving sentence of imprisonment.

(2) *Courts of First Instance.*—The composition of these Courts consists of a British and a French District Agent with a British or French Assessor chosen by lot. Their jurisdiction is over breaches of the 1914 Convention, or of Joint Regulations made thereunder, except those connected with the recruitment of native labour.

(3) *Native Courts.*—These are composed of either a British or French District Agent, assisted by two native Assessors. The British and French Agents preside over the Court in turns, month and month about. A necessary corollary to the full and complete functioning of these Courts is the promulgation in the area of the Native Code.

(4) and (5) *National Courts.*—The British and French Governments have established in the Group, in conformity with their existing legal systems, Courts with jurisdiction over all civil cases, other than those reserved to the Joint Court, and over all criminal cases in which a non-native is the defendant. In civil cases the jurisdiction over actions between non-natives belongs in some cases to the Court of the Power under whose law the contract was concluded, or the act or thing in question originated, and in other cases to the Court of the Power to which the defendant belongs. In criminal cases, non-natives are justiciable by the Court of their own nationality or the nationality applied to them.

Courts of First Instance have so far been set up in Central Districts Nos. 1 and 2.

A Code of Native Criminal Law has been instituted, and two Native Courts—one in the Central District No. 1 and one in the Southern District—have been formed to administer Penal Law only within their competence and jurisdiction.

There were no serious cases of crime during the year. The Joint Court delivered 20 judgments concerning breaches of Joint Regulations and of the Convention of 1914, and dealt with two cases of offences by natives against non-natives.

Police.

The policing of the Group is carried out by two separate forces of Armed Native Constabulary, British and French, each in charge of a National Commandant under the orders of the respective Resident Commissioner. The headquarters are at Vila ; small detachments are located at each of the District Agencies on the islands of Tanna, Malekula, and Santo, respectively, in order to assist the District Agents in the carrying out of their duties.

The British force is composed of natives recruited from the islands of the New Hebrides, and the French force partly of New Hebrideans and Loyalty Islanders. In addition the French have enrolled a number of Tonkinese police, for the purpose of facilitating police operations among the Tonkinese coolies in the Group.

The duties of the native constabulary consist in the maintenance of law and order among the native population of the more civilized areas, general police and patrol work, the guarding of native prisoners, and the repression of native disorders.

Both the British and French Commandants, in addition to their duties as police officers to the Condominium, also act as police officers in so far as their own nationals are concerned, and are charged with the conduct of police cases before their respective national Courts.

The cost of the maintenance of the two forces is defrayed by the respective national Governments, except when the two corps are acting jointly, when the expenses are met from Condominium funds.

Natives of the islands are enlisted in the Police generally for periods of two years. Some re-engage ; some do not ; but it is safe to say that the two years spent under discipline is one of the most civilizing influences in the New Hebrides.

Prisons.

Each Government maintains its own national prison, which is situated in the town of Vila, and accommodation is provided for both natives and whites. The cost of maintenance of prisoners sentenced by the national tribunals is met from national funds, and that of natives sentenced by the Resident Commissioners and the native and mixed Courts, from Condominium funds.

There is no Condominium prison staff. Each Commandant acts as prison keeper and is responsible for the supervision of prisoners placed in his charge. He is assisted by police constables who act as warders.

In addition to the national prisons at headquarters, each District Agency is provided with a temporary lock-up in which natives under short sentences are confined.

Native prisoners are employed in works of general utility, such as the making and cleaning of roads, weeding Government paddocks, transport of material to various Government buildings, etc.

The daily average of native prisoners confined in the British prison was 3.3, and in the French prison 4.5. Two prisoners died in the British prison. Generally speaking, the health of prisoners was good.

VII.—PUBLIC WORKS.

The Condominium maintains a Public Works Department, controlled by a Superintendent and an Assistant. Building material is imported from Australia. Dwelling houses are usually imported cut and ready for erection, as the supply of skilled artizans is very limited. Practically all buildings are constructed of wood, or galvanized iron, with wood or steel frames, owing to the frequency of earth tremors. The construction and maintenance of roads and bridges is carried out by local contracts in conjunction with the Works Department. Labour is difficult to procure and commands a high rate of wage. The expenditure on Condominium public works for the year under report amounted to approximately £6,900.

VIII.—PUBLIC HEALTH.

Climate.

The New Hebrides islands are classed as unhealthy. The climate, though very enervating, is not worse than that of many other tropical places. The year is divided up, generally speaking, into two seasons, the hot and wet season, commencing in November and ending in April, and the dry and cool season from May to October. Of late, however, the tendency is for the line of demarcation to become less clear, there being considerable periods of drought in the rainy season, and vice versa in the dry season. The temperature in the island of Efate ranges from a minimum of about 63°F. in the cool season to a maximum of about 89°F. in the hot. The hot season is the most unhealthy owing to the extreme humidity and the prevalence of mosquitoes. Also it is so enervating as to make recovery from an illness somewhat prolonged. The cool season is generally speaking healthy and very pleasant. The southern islands of the group are cooler and healthier than the north—the latter

being about 7°F. warmer on the average. Provided careful attention is paid to the general conditions of living, sufficient but not too much exercise taken, and moderation in habits is observed, a satisfactory state of health may be maintained. One of the chief enemies of good health at Vila is the scarcity of green vegetables and good quality fresh food generally. As a general rule it is desirable that a visit be taken to a temperate climate every two or three years, especially in the case of women and children. Children do not thrive in the New Hebrides and it is desirable that they should be sent to a temperate climate after the age of four.

Diseases.

Malaria is the principal disease. It is more prevalent in the northern islands than the southern, owing to the difference in climate and rainfall. Quinine is usually administered to sufferers by injection, which has the advantage of not deranging the digestive system. Planters and missionaries in out-of-the-way parts are beginning to use injections of quinine in preference to taking it by mouth. Amoebic dysentery is endemic throughout the year and epidemic in the hot season. Both these diseases are being combated with success by measures of sanitation. Black water fever occurs occasionally among Europeans. The indigenous population suffers chiefly from yaws, hookworm, malaria, and dysentery. The various hospitals in the group, both Government and Missionary, treat the natives for these complaints. The special campaign against yaws and hookworm, under the auspices of the Rockefeller Institute, is dealt with elsewhere.

Hospitals.

The following hospitals and medical aid posts are to be found :—

Tanna.—A well equipped hospital run by the Presbyterian Mission and subsidized by the British Government.

Efate.—Two well equipped hospitals at Vila ; the John G. Paton Memorial Hospital, administered by the Presbyterian Mission and subsidized by the British Government, and the French Government hospital.

Epi.—A Medical Aid Post in charge of an Annamite Medical Practitioner.

Malekula.—A hospital at Norsup run by private enterprise (Compagnie Cotonnière), and a Medical Aid Post at Port Sandwich in charge of an Annamite Medical Practitioner.

Santo.—French Government hospital at the Segond Channel, recently extended and enlarged.

All these institutions are open to white residents, Asiatics, and natives, and do excellent work. The statistics for 1928 and 1929

in respect of the British and French hospitals at Vila are given below :—

Cases.	*British Hospital.*		*French Hospital.*		
	Europeans.	*Natives and Asiatics.*	*Europeans.*	*Natives and Asiatics.*	*Total.*
"In" patients—					
1928	30	450	177	2,672	3,169
1929	39	342	201	2,191	2,773
"Out" patients					
1928	—	439	890	9,628	10,957
1929	23	300	1,400	4,500	6,223
Total 1928 ...	30	889	1,067	12,300	14,126
1929 ...	62	642	1,601	6,691	8,996
Deaths 1928 ...	—	14	12	86	112
1929 ...	2	16	10	88	116

Sanitation.

There are no modern systems of sanitation in the New Hebrides. Vila, the capital town, is still without any sort of water works or drainage. The only source of water supply is the roofs of the houses. These form a catchment area from which water is collected in rainy weather into large galvanized iron tanks. In periods of drought water runs short and frequently has to be transported for some distance, for purposes other than drinking. The tank system has the disadvantage of providing breeding places for mosquitoes, unless adequately protected. They have, on the other hand, the advantage of providing an extremely pure source of drinking water which it is practically impossible to contaminate.

Most Europeans adopt the pit system of latrine, but nearly all the houses occupied by officials are now provided with septic tanks, which, with reasonable care, have proved the most satisfactory method available.

During the year legislation was brought into force in Vila, providing penalties for various offences against hygiene, and a Sanitary Commission was set up with powers of inspection of all private and public premises. At the same time a sanitary service was organized, which is responsible for the daily collection and disposal of refuse and rubbish from all over the town.

The combination of the three has undoubtedly been a success and has resulted in a marked improvement. A Regulation has also been introduced to enforce a rigorous inspection of all meat tendered for human consumption. This has been followed by an appreciable improvement in the quality of meat obtainable.

A quarantine station was in the course of erection at the end of the year.

Report of the Condominium Medical Officer.

There has been a marked improvement in public health in the year 1929. There has been no epidemic and less endemic disease than usual. Malaria and dysentery have abated as a result of the sanitary measures that have been inaugurated during the year. These have served the double purpose of daily removal, firstly, of tins and broken bottles, a fertile source of mosquito propagation, and secondly, of refuse and rubbish dumps, one of the chief breeding places of flies, which are the main carriers of dysentery.

Hookworm and yaws are being treated with success under the auspices of the Rockefeller Institute.

Native Medical Welfare.

During the year 1929 the Rockefeller Foundation, in conjunction with the Condominium Government, commenced a yaws and hookworm campaign in the Group. A large percentage of the natives of the New Hebrides are infected with hookworm (ankylostomiasis) and yaws is prevalent in many of the islands.

Work was commenced early in February, and the southern islands were visited first. Centres were established at Lenakel and Whitesands, and four sub-centres on North and South Tanna, for examination and hookworm treatment. In the treatment of yaws intravenous method of injection was employed, and no difficulty was experienced in getting the natives to present themselves for examination and treatment. The treatment for hookworm was usually given first, followed by two and sometimes three injections for yaws—depending on the severity of the case. It was found that in normal cases two injections were sufficient to effect a cure. On the completion of treatment in the southern islands, the campaign was extended to the first central district, and towards the close of the year to some of the islands in the second central district. It is the intention that every island in the Group shall be systematically treated, and there is no doubt as to the beneficial results of the treatment. The immediate results obtained by intravenous injections of salvarsan in the case of yaws is spectacular, and in consequence appeals strongly to the natives. During the year under report over 11,000 natives were treated for both diseases. A table is appended, showing details of the work performed.

In conjunction with the Rockefeller Foundation, the Condominium Government is also maintaining two students at the Suva Medical School, who, when qualified, will be attached to the Condominium Medical Staff for native medical work in the New Hebrides.

At the present time there are four European qualified Medical Officers in the Group who devote themselves to native medical welfare, in so far as the exigencies of their duties permit, and who receive an allowance from the Condominium Government for that purpose. One of them carries out the duties of Medical Inspector for natives and makes periodical tours in the Group for that purpose.

Statistical Report on Work done for the Relief and Control of Hookworm Disease and Yaws in the New Hebrides for the Year ending 31st December, 1929.

Islands.	*Census.*	*Given Hookworm Treatment.*	*Examined for Yaws.*	*No. with Yaws lesions and history.*	*Given injections for Yaws.*			*Total.*
					1st.	2nd.	3rd.	
Tanna	5,319	4,744	5,201	4,286	3,340	2,987	150	6,477
Futuna	243	220	243	225	233	233	23	489
Aniwa	155	143	155	149	136	136	—	272
Aneityum	182	170	182	136	174	86	—	260
Vila Natives...	922	413	773	512	718	432	24	1,174
Nguna	501	447	501	382	484	478	155	1,117
Pele	74	71	74	50	72	70	23	165
Undine Bay	76	70	76	61	72	—	—	72
Lilipa...	119	100	119	89	108	—	—	108
Moso and Seviri	106	92	98	90	102	—	—	102
Emau	322	290	322	254	314	261	—	575
Mataso	75	64	74	55	74	58	—	132
Makura	133	115	133	95	129	128	—	257
Emae	227	184	223	190	216	202	—	418
Tongoa	1,120	922	1,055	737	1,040	910	52	2,002
Tongariki	238	200	238	194	234	216	25	475
N.W. Epi and Larmanu ...	881	829	881	562	870	731	35	1,636
Paama	1,751	1,576	1,751	1,265	1,730	1,650	183	3,563
S.E. Ambrim	1,039	930	1,039	704	1,020	1,001	47	2,068
Plantation natives, Vila ...	136	130	136	105	136	4	2	142
Dispensary	238	210	207	144	220	136	45	401
Tonkinese	1,255	1,082	—	—	185	—	—	185
Total...	15,112	13,002	13,481	10,285	11,607	9,719	764	22,090

IX.—EDUCATION.

There are no schools controlled or supported by the Condominium Government, nor are there any facilities for European children to receive anything but a primary education, which is not of a very high standard.

The town of Vila has three schools (1) a school for girls, supported and controlled by the Sisters of the Sacred Heart Mission; (2) a boys' school, supported and controlled by the Marist Mission; and (3) an infants' school, run by the French Government. Admission to these schools is not restricted to the children of European parentage and the entrance fees are purely nominal.

The British and French Missions in the Group have various good schools and training institutions for the benefit of the natives. The Presbyterian Mission maintain an excellent school at Tangoa, South Santo, and can accommodate up to sixty pupils. They also maintain other schools throughout the Group. The Melanesian Mission have a good school at Lolowai, Aoba, and schools in the Banks Group. The Seventh Day Mission have a utilitarian school at Aore island, Santo, which is equipped with modern machinery for teaching all kinds of woodcraft. The Marist Mission also maintain schools in various islands of the Group.

All these institutions carry out excellent work among the natives and deserve commendation.

X.—LANDS AND SURVEY.

Land owned by white settlers in the New Hebrides was acquired originally from native owners, either by purchase or barter. Ownership at the present day is based on these native deeds, but such deeds do not constitute a valid title until judgment has been pronounced upon them by the Joint Court. The procedure in regard to obtaining titles to land in the New Hebrides is set out in Articles 22 to 27 of the Protocol of 1914. Approximately 1,000 claims have been lodged at the Joint Court, representing an area of approximately 2,150,000 acres.

Up to the close of the year under report 54 indefeasible titles had been granted, all on the island of Efate. The speed with which titles are granted is dependent to a large extent on the land surveys of the properties affected and the claims of opposing applicants for title. A staff of surveyors is attached to the Court, but, owing to the nature of the country and the large tracts of land which require checking and surveying, progress is necessarily slow. In the grant of land titles due consideration is given to the requirements of the indigenous population, and, when necessary, reserves are set aside for them. An official Native Advocate is appointed by the two Governments to assist the natives in any disputes with white claimants. The Torrens system of land title has been adopted in the New Hebrides.

XI.—LABOUR.

The supply of indigenous labour for agricultural, industrial and commercial purposes falls far below the demand, and considerable difficulty is experienced by planters in harvesting their crops. The employment of native labourers under contract is regulated by the provisions of the Protocol of 1914, and also by additional national legislation in the case of British settlers. The New Hebrides native is disinclined to engage himself for any lengthy period and prefers short contracts of a few months' duration.

The inadequate supply of local labour for French undertakings was met by the French authorities by the introduction in 1921 of Tonkinese from French Indo-China. At the present time there are approximately 6,000 Tonkinese in the Group. They are engaged to French settlers for a period of five years and then repatriated. The Tonkinese makes a fairly good labourer, but it is generally conceded that he is not equal to the New Hebridean as a worker.

XII.—POPULATION.

Non-Native.

A statement is appended giving details of the non-native population of the Group.

Description.	*British.*			*French.*		
	Adult Males.	*Females and Children.*	*Total.*	*Adult Males.*	*Females and Children.*	*Total.*
Nationals	129	98	227	369	428	797
Foreigners opted under Convention ...	9	4	13	17	—	17
Asiatics opted under Convention ...	28	—	28	56	—	56
Protected subjects and citizens:						
Tonkinese ...	—	—	—	4,045	1,351	5,396
Javanese ...	—	—	—	21	9	30
Totals ...	166	102	268	4,508	1,788	6,296

Native.

The natives are Melanesians, but in places there is a mixture of Polynesian blood.

The conditions of the Group do not permit of any reliable census of the native population. The total is probably not more than

60,000 and in general the population is on the decrease. The following gives an approximate estimate of the more thickly populated islands :—

Malekula, 9,000 ; Pentecost, 7,000 ; Santo, 7,000 ; Tanna, 6,500 ; Aoba, 6,000 ; Ambrym, 5,000 ; Epi, 3,000 ; and Efate, 1,700.

From reports received, the islands of Tanna and Tongoa showed a tendency to an increase in birth-rate during 1929.

XIII.—METEOROLOGICAL.

A hurricane occurred in the southern islands of the Group during March and caused considerable damage to the crops. No other violent disturbances occurred during the year. The table below shows the rainfall at four stations in the Group for 1929, and the mean annual for the past five years :—

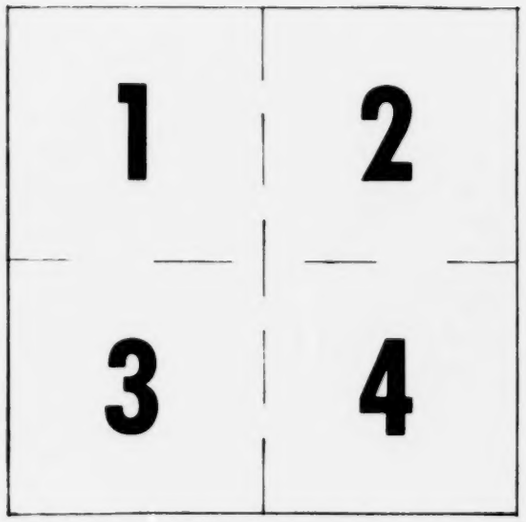
Year.	*Dillons Bay (Erromanga).* 18·47 *S.* 168·58 *E.*	*Port Vila (Efate).* 17·44 *S.* 168·18 *E.*	*Hog Harbour (East Santo).* 15·05 *S.* 167·67 *E.*	*Port Patterson (Vanua Lava, Banks Is.).* 13·50 *S.* 167·34 *E.*
1925	61·25	74·56	127·44	128·44
1926	62·34	73·06	133·34	137·50
1927	59·77	74·26	134·41	143·42
1928	47·51	72·03	135·62	142·12
1929	64·17	80·51	136·81	140·62
Mean Annual for five years ...	59·00	74·88	133·32	138·42

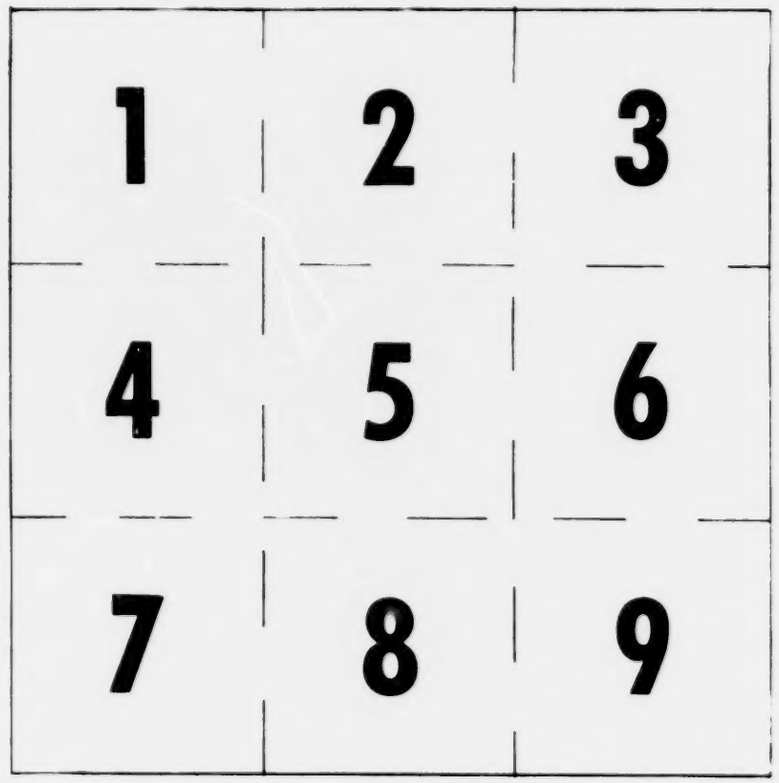
G. A. JOY,
Resident Commissioner.

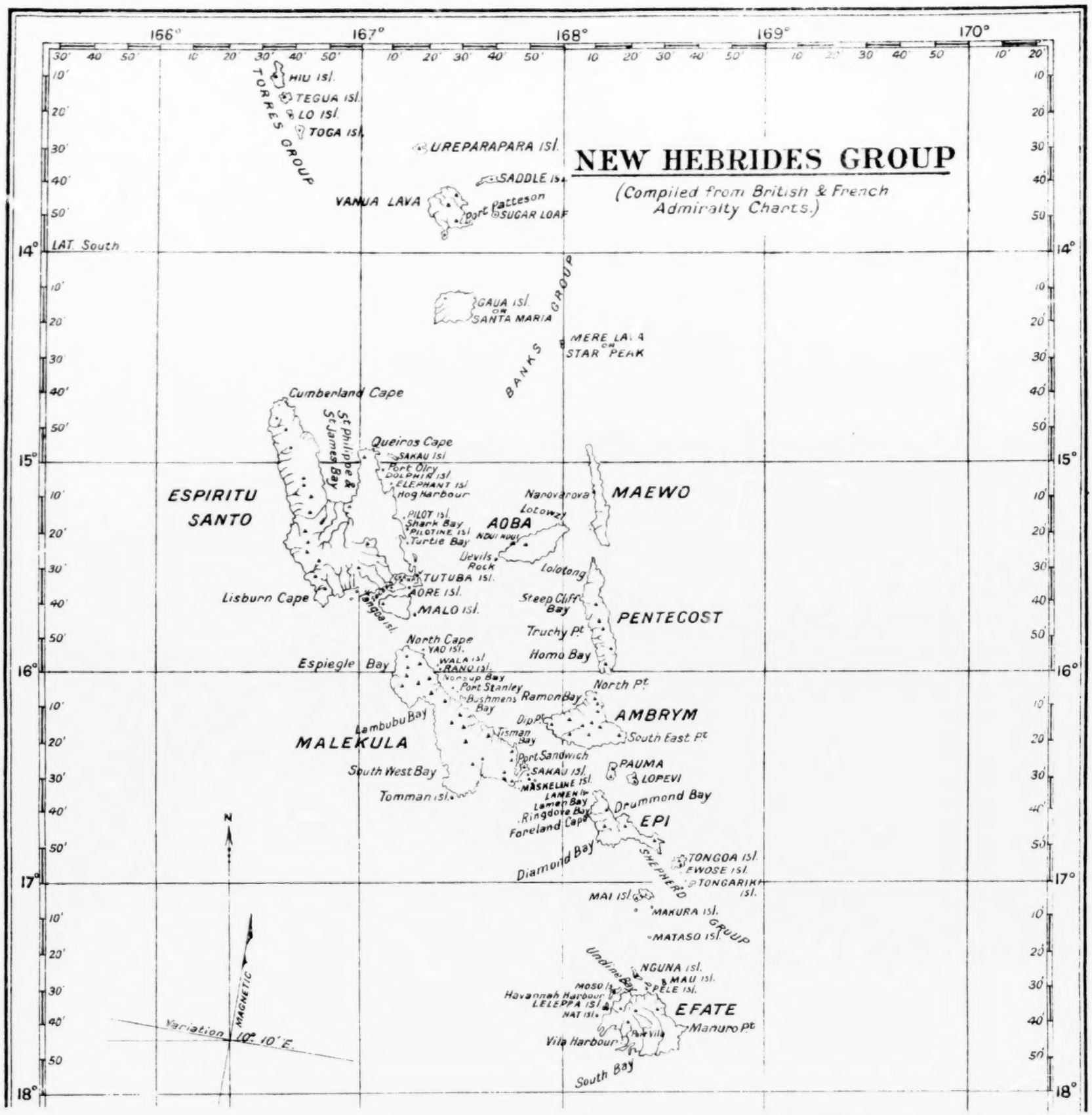
BRITISH RESIDENCY,
VILA, NEW HEBRIDES.
10th April, 1930.

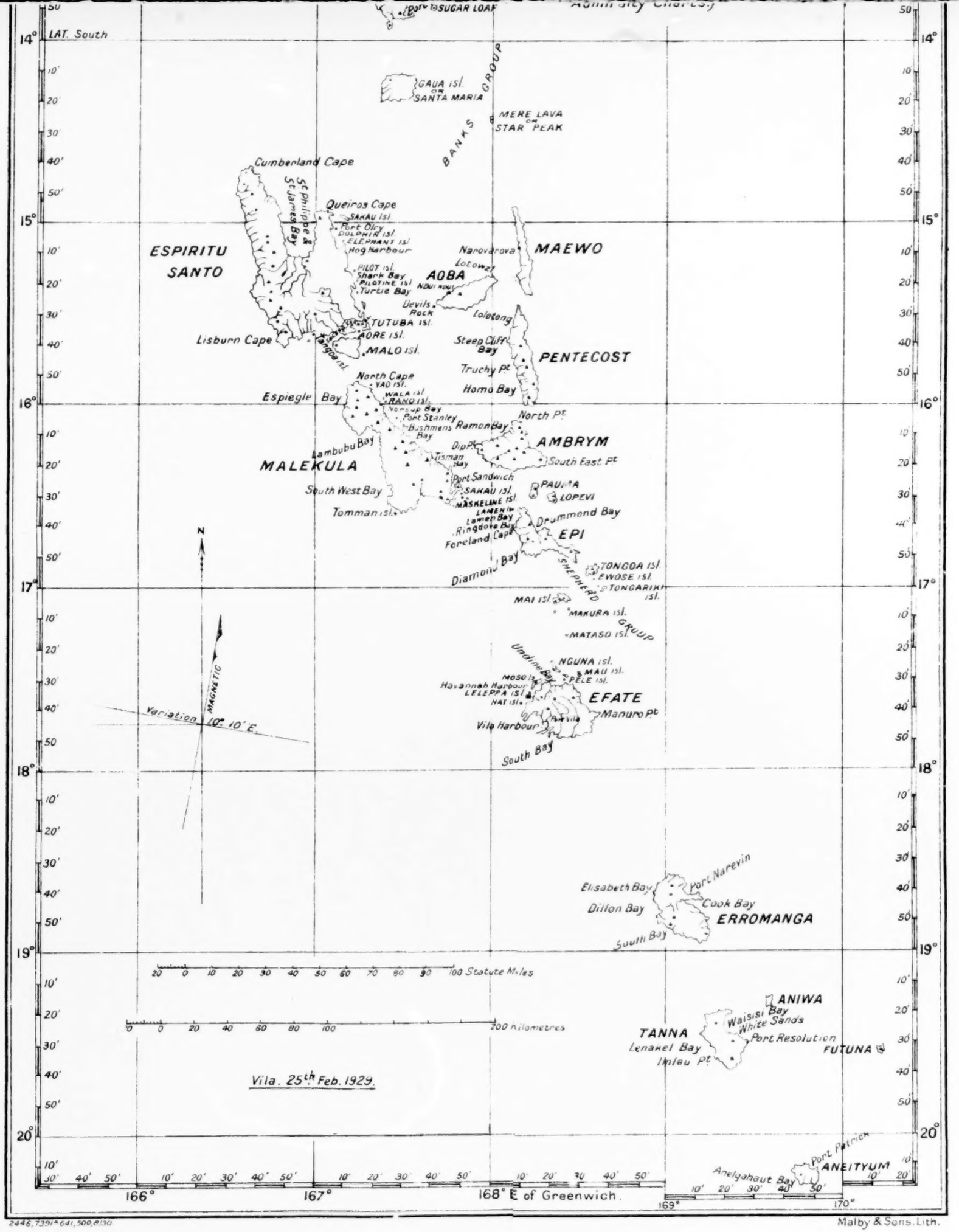
(7544—21) Wt. 7391—641 500 9/30 P.St. G7/8

Maps on this order too large to be entirely included in one exposure are filmed clockwise beginning in the upper left hand corner, left to right and top to bottom as many frames as required. The following diagrams illustrate the method.






NEW HEBRIDES GROUP
(Compiled from British & French Admiralty Charts.)
166°
167°
168°
169°
170°
14° LAT. South
15°
16°
17°
18°
TORRES GROUP
HIU ISL.
TEGUA ISL.
LO ISL.
TOGA ISL.
UREPARAPARA ISL.
SADDLE ISL.
VANUA LAVA
Port Patteson
SUGAR LOAF
BANKS GROUP
GAUA ISL. OR SANTA MARIA
MERE LAVA OR STAR PEAK
Cumberland Cape
St Philippe & St James Bay
Queiros Cape
SAKAU ISL.
Port Olry
DOLPHIN ISL.
ELEPHANT ISL.
Hog Harbour
ESPIRITU SANTO
PILOT ISL.
Shark Bay
PILOTINE ISL.
Turtle Bay
Nanovarova
MAEWO
Lotowzy
AOBA
NOUI NOUI
Devils Rock
TUTUBA ISL.
AORE ISL.
Lisburn Cape
Tangoa ISL.
MALO ISL.
Lolotong
Steep Cliff Bay
PENTECOST
Truchy Pt
Homo Bay
North Cape
YAO ISL.
WALA ISL.
RANO ISL.
Espiegle Bay
Norsup Bay
Port Stanley
Bushmens Bay
Ramon Bay
North Pt
AMBRYM
Dip Pt
South East Pt
Lambubu Bay
Tisman Bay
MALEKULA
Port Sandwich
SAKAU ISL.
PAUMA
LOPEVI
South West Bay
MASKELINE ISL.
Tomman ISL.
LANEN IS
Laman Bay
Ringdove Bay
Foreland Cape
Drummond Bay
EPI
Diamond Bay
SHEPHERD GROUP
TONGOA ISL.
EWOSE ISL.
TONGARIKI ISL.
MAI ISL.
MAKURA ISL.
MATASO ISL.
Undine Bay
NGUNA ISL.
MAU ISL.
MOSO ISL.
PELE ISL.
Havannah Harbour
LELEPPA ISL.
NAT ISL.
EFATE
Manuro Pt
Vila Harbour
Port Vila
South Bay
N
MAGNETIC
Variation 10° 10' E.



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EMPIRE MARKETING BOARD PUBLICATIONS.

Note on the work of the Board and Statement of Research and other Grants approved by the Secretary of State from July, 1926, to March, 1930. Cmd. 3637. 6*d.* (7*d.*)

Agricultural Economics in the Empire. (E.M.B. 1.) 6*d.* (7*d.*).

Tropical Agricultural Research in the Empire, with special reference to Cacao, Sugar Cane, Cotton and Palms. (E.M.B. 2.) 1*s.* 6*d.* (1*s.* 9*d.*).

Geophysical Surveying. Report of a Sub-Committee of the Committee of Civil Research. November, 1927. (E.M.B. 6.) 6*d.* (7*d.*).

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REPORT FOR 1930

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NEW HEBRIDES.

REPORT FOR THE YEAR 1930.

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PREFACE.

History.

The New Hebrides lie between the 12th and 20th degrees of Sou latitude, and the 165th and 170th degrees of East longitude, a are of an area of roughly 5,700 square miles. The principal po of the Group and the seat of Government is the township of Vil on the island of Efate, in the southern part of the Group and abo five or six days' steam from Sydney, New South Wales.

Santo, the largest and one of the northernmost islands of th Group, was discovered by Quiros in 1606, who touched at the Ba of St. Phillip (Big Bay). Under the impression that he had locate the long-sought Southern Continent he named it " Tierra Austral del Expiritu Santo," and it is recorded that a settlement was estal lished at the River Jordan but was later abandoned on account sickness and dissensions with the natives.

Nothing further was heard of the Group until the year 176 when Cook touched at various points and, in the year 1774, charte and named most of the larger islands.

At about the same period of Cook's discoveries the Frenc navigator, Bougainville, sailed between the islands of Santo an Malekula, thereby disproving Quiros' theory as to the existence

the great Southern Continent. The strait through which he passed still bears his name.

In 1788 the French Government expedition under La Perouse is supposed to have visited these islands, but came to an untimely end at Vanikoro, in the Santa Cruz Group, a little to the north of the New Hebrides.

The Banks Group, forming part of the Northern New Hebrides, was sighted by Bligh in 1793.

D'Entrecasteau, Dumont d'Urville, Belcher, Markham, and others, are among the early voyagers whose accounts of these islands are of interest.

The New Hebrides for many years were practically a " no man's land," and a favourite hunting ground for recruiting vessels, but, in the year 1887, a Joint Naval Commission was appointed, charged with the protection of the lives and property of the subjects of the two nations—France and England—in the islands. The Commission was composed of two officers from each of the English and French warships in these waters and was presided over alternately by the British and French Commanders.

In 1895 an Arbitration Court was formed by the colonists, but the Joint Naval Commission pronounced its veto and the Court was dissolved.

In 1902 the first British Resident Commissioner was appointed, the French Government having a short time previously appointed a similar official.

Geography.

The islands of the New Hebrides, with which are included the Banks and Torres Groups, form an incomplete double chain stretching in a north-north-west direction for a length of 550 miles and consist of about 80 islands. Santo is the largest with an area of approximately 1,500 square miles and a coastline of over 200 miles. Of the smaller islands there are about 18 averaging a little over five square miles. The larger islands are high (highest point 6,169 feet) and show extensive exposures of volcanic rocks underlying areas of raised coral terraces, which latter reach in some cases an elevation of quite 2,000 feet. The smaller islands are often wholly volcanic. There are three principal volcanoes in the Group, which are usually active, situated on the islands of Tanna, Lopevi, and Ambrym. Santo contains numerous small rivers, only navigable, however, to minor craft.

The Group has three good harbours. Vila, Efate, the headquarters of the Administration, lies on one of these harbours. It is a small town built on the surrounding hills, which extend to the beach, on which are to be found the principal business houses.

Languages.

The European languages spoken in the Group are English and French. There is no unification of the native language; each

island speaks a different tongue, and there are many different dialects in the same island. The lingua franca is pidgin-English.

Currency, etc.

English and French currencies are legal tender in the Group, and British and French systems of weights and measures are in use.

I.—GENERAL.

By the Convention of 20th October, 1906, a Condominium was set up with a Joint Court composed of British and French Judges and a neutral President; and an executive Government consisting, for some purposes, of the British and French representatives in the Groups acting in concert. For other purposes British and French nationals remain subject to the control only of their national authorities. The Convention of 20th October, 1906, has been superseded by a Convention of 6th August, 1914, which was ratified in March, 1922.

The British and French Resident Commissioners are subordinate to the High Commissioner for the Western Pacific and the High Commissioner at Noumea, respectively.

The year was particularly free from volcanic or seismic disturbance and there was no hurricane damage of any importance.

The following warships paid brief visits to the Group:—H.M.S. *Dunedin* and H.M.S. *Veronica* of the New Zealand squadron, and the French sloops *Bellatrix* and *Cassiopé* of the French Pacific Squadron.

II.—FINANCE.

By Article 5 of the Convention of 1914 each of the two Powers is required to defray the expenses of its own administration in the Group. The expenses of the joint services are defrayed out of local taxation. The joint services include the Posts and Telegraphs, Customs, Public Works, Port and Harbour, Treasury, Medical Service, Joint Court, Summary Courts, and the Land Registry. In the event of revenue from local taxation proving insufficient to meet expenditure, the two signatory Powers are bound to contribute to the deficit in equal proportions. No such contribution has been required since the year 1921.

There are no banks in the New Hebrides. The French Commercial Houses carry out their banking business with the Banque de l'Indo-Chine in Noumea, New Caledonia, and the British with banks in Australia. The practice has been for the larger commercial houses to act as bankers to their clients within the group. During the year in question, however, the effects of the financial crisis upset a great deal of the normal workings of such official and non-official banking, owing to shortage of cash and credit generally and the adverse balance of trade. The Banque de l'Indo-Chine has a local note issue, which ranks *pari passu* with Banque

de France notes and which facilitates French financial transactions within the Group, acting as it does in concert with the French Treasury. Money transfers in francs can be done very cheaply through the latter to France and French Colonies. English and Australian silver have been fairly plentiful in the group, but the circulation of Australian notes, formerly common, although not legal tender, diminished owing to the depreciation of Australian currency. For local purposes the exchange rate of 124 francs to to £ sterling has been adopted throughout the Group.

Revenue and Expenditure.

Condominium Revenue.

Year.	*French currency.* *Francs.*		*British currency.* £	*Remarks.** *Converted at*
1926	1,777,199	or	11,540	francs 154=£
1927	3,037,711	or	24,497	francs 124=£
1928	3,463,551	or	27,932	francs 124=£
1929	3,549,562	or	28,624	francs 124=£
1930†	2,498,819	or	20,152	francs 124=£

Condominium Expenditure.

Year.	*French currency.* *Francs.*		*British currency.* £	*Remarks.** *Converted at*
1926	1,217,599	or	7,906	francs 154=£
1927	2,220,479	or	17,907	francs 124=£
1928	3,568,404	or	28,777	francs 124=£
1929	3,210,639	or	25,892	francs 124=£
1930†	3,489,402	or	28,140	francs 124=£

Over four-fifths of the Condominium revenue is derived from import and export dues and the balance from Post Office and telegraph receipts, court fees and fines, port dues, trading licences, and miscellaneous receipts. The bulk of the imports are subject to a 6 per cent *ad valorem* duty and the exports to a 1 per cent *ad valorem* duty. Other import duties are 12 per cent *ad valorem* on spirits and tobacco, and 20 per cent *ad valorem* on lace, perfumery, and fancy goods. The customs duties are set out in Joint Regulations Nos. 2 and 3 of 1927.

Expenditure on Services entirely British.

	£
1926-27	15,693
1927-28	16,048
1928-29	11,966
1929-30	9,506

* During 1926 the value of the franc fluctuated considerably so that the rate 154 must be regarded as approximate.

† Partly estimated.

The above expenditure is defrayed from funds provided by Parliament on Civil Estimates, Vote for Colonial and Middle Eastern Services Class II, 9. Certain miscellaneous receipts, such as court fees, rent, etc., totalling usually a few hundred pounds each year, are now applied in reduction of the Vote on which expenditure is provided for. The expenditure on British services includes, among other things, the personal emoluments of the British national staff, Police Force, and the District Agents.

III.—PRODUCTION AND NATURAL RESOURCES.

The year 1930 has fortunately shown a rise in exports of some 1,300 tons over 1929, which has to some small extent made up for the most unremunerative prices ruling. Exports are not yet up to the record of 1928. Though no hurricanes were experienced, low prices have caused a falling off in native production and drought caused some crops to be less than expected. There is at present no incentive for new cleaning and planting and many planters are contenting themselves with picking, even having in some cases abandoned the clearing of their plantations.

The main increase is in copra—1,100 tons above the 1929 figure. The greater part of this was produced on non-native owned plantations. The percentage of copra exported by British firms was 35 per cent of the whole. The prices shown for this commodity show a further marked decline, the local figure being offered at the end of the year being in the region of £7 per ton, as compared with £13 10s. 0d. for 1929, £16 for 1928, and £20 for 1927. Practically the whole of the copra is shipped direct to Europe or America.

Cocoa showed an increase of 200 tons, but the price had dropped to about £30 per ton locally at the end of the year, as against £43 and £50 for the preceding years. Coffee shows a slight increase and cotton a slight decrease. The prices of both have dropped over 1d. per lb. since last year, thereby lessening sensibly the likelihood of any increase in production.

The production of maize remains about the same. Owing to lack of outside markets it is unlikely to increase, though it grows easily, up to three crops per year, and is of excellent quality.

The position at the end of 1930 was probably the most discouraging that has ever had to be faced by the planter. Prices give him no margin of profit and there was no indication of any upward trend. One or two planters are trying improved methods of drying copra with a view to securing a higher price. The share of general exports falling to British exporting firms was 27½ per cent and 22 per cent for tonnage and value respectively.

Exports.

COMPARATIVE TABLE IN TONS AND STERLING.

Produce.	1926. Tons.	1926. Value. £	1927. Tons.	1927. Value. £	1928. Tons.	1928. Value. £	1929. Tons.	1929. Value. £	1930. Tons.	1930. Value. £
Copra	8,382	184,318	10,204	204,090	12,682	208,954	10,787	147,460	11,883	130,573
Cocoa	1,949	87,731	2,344	140,697	1,422	77,685	2,047	89,088	2,265	73,444
Cotton	*1,420	44,556	†501	40,170	551	43,468	329	31,700	480	26,880
Coffee	274	21,890	123	4,842	96	5,534	100	6,530	125	7,892
Trochas	85	4,686	86	4,299	61	2,627	57	2,980	55	2,721
Maize	207	1,659	118	949	303	2,277	482	4,355	455	3,670
Sandalwood	57	1,435	23	384	54	898	49	957	98	1,978
Wool	32	7,222	5	601	22	2,453	8	963	16	1,257
Cotton seed	987	1,467	880	880	1,198	1,210	657	1,060	476	591
Miscellaneous	304	19,265	63	1,116	336	975	‡643	1,139	‡607	1,514
Totals	13,697	£374,229	14,347	£398,028	16,725	£346,081	15,159	£286,232	16,460	£250,520

* Mixed. † Ginned. ‡ Includes by-products on raw cotton and uncleaned coffee.

IV.—TRADE AND ECONOMICS.

Import values in 1930 showed a sharp decline from the previous year's £300,035 to £157,541, of which British importers accounted for about 25 per cent. The Group has suffered extensively from the world depression and now imports little more than bare necessities.

Import Values.

Year.	*British currency.*	*French currency.*	*Remarks.*
	£	*Francs.*	*Converted at*
1924	92,201	7,929,327	francs 86=£
1925	217,863	22,004,232	francs 101=£
1926	197,840	30,457,405	francs 154=£
1927	307,939	38,184,562	francs 124=£
1928	374,797	46,474,828	francs 124=£
1929	300,035	37,204,343	francs 124=£
1930	157,541	19,535,138	francs 124=£

Chief Imports for 1930.

	Quantity.	*Value.* £
Beer (in cases)	664	968
Benzine (in cases)	12,049	7,761
Biscuits	—	1,234
Tinned goods and groceries (cases)	3,828	8,362
Cartridges	278,150	1,170
Cigarettes and cigars	1,021,675	1,045
Tobacco (kg.)	20,867	5,363
Cement (barrels)	3,574	1,685
Lubricating oils (cases)	1,590	1,952
Spirits (cases)	1,521	1,706
Tinned milk (cases)	1,107	1,476
Kerosene (cases)	7,075	3,600
Rice (bags)	34,720	22,661
Flour (bags 150 lb.)	8,361	6,137
Sugar (kg. 30)	5,849	2,420
Soap (cases)	536	1,141
Tinned fish (cases)	3,064	1,883
Wines (fine) (cases)	1,864	1,980
Wines (ordinaire) (barrels) ...	848	4,346
Sacks (bales)	530	2,830
Building materials	—	6,612
Agricultural machinery	—	2,210
Potatoes	—	1,000

The only important articles of British origin, of which any quantity is imported, are flour (Australia), spirits (United Kingdom and Australia), beer (Australia), fine cigarettes (Australia), tinned

meats (Australia), potatoes (Australia), onions (Australia), and biscuits (Australia). Imports of British origin are small in comparison with others. The recent fall in prices in Australia, combined with the exchange depreciation of the Australian £, have made Australian goods look more attractive, and an increase in the percentage of Australian trade is expected.

Sydney, New South Wales, is the chief local port of supply of general necessities of life. A considerable quantity of general merchandise, including most wines and spirits, come, however, direct from Europe in French steamers. Most fuel oils and lubricants come from America or Java, some direct, some via Noumea.

The principal importing firms are : (British) Messrs. Burns Philp (South Sea) Company, Limited of Vila; (French) Les Comptoirs Française des Nouvelles-Hébrides of Vila and Santo; La Compagnie Franco-Hébridaise of Vila and Santo; Les Etablissements Hagen of Epi and the Banks Group; and Messrs. Gubbay Frères of Vila. Other important Companies of the Group are also importers, such as La Société Cotonnière des Nouvelles-Hébrides, and La Société Minière et Agricole of Malekula and Santo respectively.

There are now only three small trading steamers employed in the inter-insular trade, one British and two French. Only two of these carry trade rooms, one of the French boats having been turned into a service steamer on time-table connecting with ships of the Messageries Maritimes Line, to which she has been sold. Produce is mostly transhipped at Vila and Santo into French and American Lines for shipment direct to Europe or America, though a small quantity, chiefly cocoa, finds its way to Australia.

There are three important stores in Vila, one of which is British; in addition about a dozen small shops are in the hands of Japanese and Chinese traders. One important French store failed during the year and has gone out of business.

Wages and Cost of Living.

The standard of living, which in the interests of health it is necessary to maintain in the New Hebrides, must be as high as circumstances permit. At Vila, the seat of Government, living is fairly expensive, as there are few facilities for the individual to maintain gardens or keep live stock. In other parts of the Group living is much less expensive, as there are facilities for so doing. Supplies of fresh meat, fish, eggs, and poultry, and from time to time fresh vegetables, are obtainable in Vila, but prices are high. Native labour in Vila commands 5s. per day and food. Domestic servants are difficult to obtain and it is invariably necessary to train them in domestic duties. Wages for servants vary from 25s. to 30s. per month for a female, and 30s. to 40s. for a male. The New Hebridean does not like working as a domestic for long periods; 12 months is usually the maximum period he or she will serve.

Skilled labour is very scarce, bad, and dear. There are practically no facilities for plumbing, house repairs, mending of boots, tailoring, or dressmaking. The arts and crafts are unknown to the native.

There are no hotels in the Group, but at Vila it is sometimes possible to obtain board and lodging at a French hostelry.

The following table gives the average prices for foodstuffs, etc., during the year under report :—

Fresh milk	8d. per quart.
Flour	2½d. per lb.
Sugar	3½d. ,,
Potatoes	3½d. ,,
Fresh meat	10d. to 1s. 3d. per lb.
Onions	3d. per lb.
Butter	2s. 6d. per lb.
Tea	3s. ,,
Coffee	3s. ,,
Eggs	2s. to 6s. per dozen.
Poultry	4s. to 6s. each.
Tinned meat	1s. 1d. per lb.
Wood fuel	5s. per cubic metre.
Kerosene	8s. per tin (4 gallons).
Petrol	10s. ,, ,,

Fresh milk is obtainable at Vila, but the supply is limited. Underwear can sometimes be purchased locally, but it is usually necessary to obtain all wearing apparel from Australia or Europe. Practically all perishable commodities are imported from Australia.

V.—COMMUNICATIONS.

Shipping.

Europe.—A two-monthly service of the Messageries Maritimes line is maintained between the terminal ports of Dunkirk and Noumea (New Caledonia), via Vila, on both inward and outward voyages. The route is via Tahiti, Panama, Martinique, and Marseilles, and the period of the voyage approximately 65 days between Vila and Marseilles. The following vessels are engaged in this service :—*Ville de Verdun*, *Boussole*, *Astrolabe*, *Ville de Strassbourg*, *Recherche* and *Esperence*.

Australia.—The S.S. *Makambo* (Burns Philp line) and the S.S. *Laperouse* (Messageries Maritimes) maintain respectively six and five-weekly communication with Sydney, New South Wales—the former via Norfolk and Lord Howe Islands, and the latter via Lifou, Loyalty Islands, and Noumea, New Caledonia.

Dutch Line.—A regular service is also maintained by the Royal Packet Navigation Company's steamer *Le Maire* between Saigon and Noumea, touching at Vila about every two and a-half months, via New Guinea, Rabaul, and Batavia.

New Caledonia.—Communication is maintained with Noumea by the S.S. *La Perouse* every four to five weeks, and by the Messageries lines of steamers previously mentioned, approximately every two months. The French inter-island steamers also pay fairly frequent visits to Noumea.

Inter-Island.—The following steamers make monthly or five-weekly voyages round the Group. They have no fixed itinerary, but usually connect at Vila with the British or French mail vessels :—

S.S *Malinoa* (Burns Philp, South Sea Company), S.S. *Saint André* (Messageries Maritimes), S.S. *Kobiloko* (Etablissements Hagen), Inter Cruiser *Loloita* (Naturel Frères).

The Port of Vila is the port of entry in the Group. The tonnage entered and cleared during 1930 is as follows :—

ENTERED.

	Tons.	
British	12,300	(18 vessels)
French	104,000	(35 vessels)
Other	22,900	(11 vessels)
	139,200	

CLEARED.

	Tons.	
British	13,000	(18 vessels)
French	104,200	(37 vessels)
Other	22,900	(11 vessels)
	140,100	

Roads.

During the year under report some small improvements have been made to the roads in and around the town of Vila, but such work has had to be curtailed owing to financial difficulties. A ford over the river La Colle was completed during the year. A part of the upkeep and repair of the roads has continued to be done by the Public Works Department.

There are few roads proper in the other islands of the Group, with the exception of Tanna which has several good roads, one of which traverses the island.

The use of motor transport by all sections of the population of Efate has increased the importance of road construction.

Railways.

There are no railways proper in the Group. A two-foot rail track runs from the outskirts of Mélé to Vila—a distance of about four miles—and is used for various commercial purposes. The small wharves, privately-owned by the commercial houses in Vila, are also provided with rails for the transport of merchandise from the bulk store sheds.

Posts.

Mail communication from and to Europe and Australia is maintained by the mail steamers S.S. *Makambo* and S.S. *La Perouse*, which call at Vila and various island ports every five weeks. These lines are subsidized by His Majesty's Government in Australia and the French Government, respectively. The mails both inward and outward are sorted at Vila and rebagged for distribution round the Group by selected officers on the mail and inter-island steamers, who receive an allowance from the Condominium Government for the services performed. The average time for European postal matter to reach Vila by the regular mail routes is forty-two to forty-nine days. The Condominium Government has a postage stamp designed to represent the dual control. There are two sets of stamps—one British and one French. Both are inscribed in English and French currency.

The postal matter handled by the Vila Post Office for 1930 was as follows :—

—	*From, or to, British territory.*		*From, or to, French territory.*		*Other places.*		*Total.*
	Received.	*Despatched.*	*Received.*	*Despatched.*	*Received.*	*Despatched.*	
Letters	26,000	16,000	67,000	38,000	2,500	1,500	151,000
Other articles ...	50,000	2,000	34,000	5,000	400	200	91,600
Registered articles	240	839	2,076	5,387	101	147	8,790
Totals ...	76,240	18,839	103,076	48,387	3,001	1,847	251,390

Radio-telegraph.

There is no cable communication with the New Hebrides, but the Condominium Government maintains a radio-telegraph station at Vila, which is worked by British and French operators. The call sign is F J X and messages can be received and transmitted on the following wave-lengths :—

Receipts : 17 to 40 metres, 600 and 800 metres.
Transmissions : 600 and 800 metres.

The greater part of the traffic is with Noumea, New Caledonia. There is a daily service, much interrupted by atmospherics, with Suva, Fiji, and when conditions permit communication is established with other stations in the Pacific. The terminal charge of the Vila Station is 3d. or 1 franc 50 centimes, per word.

A table is given below showing statistics for the year under report :—

Messages.	*Received.*	*Despatched.*	*Total.*
Government messages ...	559	627	1,186
Other messages ...	2,178	2,069	4,247
Totals	2,737	2,696	5,433

The Vila Station was built in 1917 and the developments in wireless telegraphy which have taken place since that date have made it necessary that the station should be modernised. This matter is now receiving attention. A temporary continuous wave transmitting set was in the course of construction at the end of the year with a view to uninterrupted communication with Suva.

Telephones.

Telephone communication is established in the town of Vila and the outlying districts. The system is operated by a central exchange and the service is continuous. There are 62 telephones and 74 miles of wire. During the hurricane season the service is liable to interruption. There are no telephone systems in the other islands of the Group.

VI.—JUSTICE, POLICE, AND PRISONS.

Justice.

The Convention of 1914 provided for the immediate introduction of three Courts, namely the Joint Court, and the French and British National Courts, and the subsequent formation of two others —Courts of First Instance and Native Courts.

The scope and functions of these Courts is briefly as follows :—

(1) *Joint Court.*—The Court is composed of a British and a French Judge, with a President of neutral nationality. There is also a Public Prosecutor and a Native Advocate. The Joint Court is a Court of final adjudication in matters of purely Condominium nature. Broadly speaking, and subject to certain exceptions, its civil jurisdiction is confined to certain proceedings in respect to rights over immovable property—its chief function being that of a land Court governing the registration of indefeasible titles to land. It may also settle cases between any parties, native or non-native, brought before it by consent of both. Its criminal jurisdiction, broadly speaking, is confined to offences—(*a*) connected with the recruitment of native labourers, or (*b*) committed by natives against non-natives, or (*c*) committed by natives against natives in areas where the Native Code is in force and involving a penalty of over one year's confinement, or (*d*) against the Convention or Joint Regulations passed in pursuance thereof in areas where no Court of First Instance exists.

There is an appeal to the Joint Court from all judgments of Courts of First Instance and from important civil judgments of Native Courts. The Joint Court also has certain revisionary powers in criminal cases of Native Courts, and judgments of Courts of First Instance involving sentence of imprisonment.

(2) *Courts of First Instance.*—The composition of these Courts consists of a British and a French District Agent with a British or French Assessor chosen by lot. Their jurisdiction is over breaches of the 1914 Convention, or of Joint Regulations made thereunder, except those connected with the recruitment of native labour.

(3) *Native Courts.*—These are composed of either a British or French District Agent, assisted by two native Assessors. The British and French Agents preside over the Court in turns, month and month about. A necessary corollary to the full and complete functioning of these Courts is the promulgation in the area of the Native Code.

(4) and (5) *National Courts.*—The British and French Governments have established in the Group, in conformity with their existing legal systems, Courts with jurisdiction over all civil cases, other than those reserved to the Joint Court, and over all criminal cases in which a non-native is the defendant. In civil cases the jurisdiction over actions between non-natives belongs in some cases to the Court of the Power under whose law the contract was concluded, or the act or thing in question originated, and in other cases to the Court of the Power to which the defendant belongs. In criminal cases, non-natives are justiciable by the Court of their own nationality or the nationality applied to them.

Courts of First Instance have so far been set up in Central Districts Nos. 1 and 2.

A Code of Native Criminal Law has been instituted, and two Native Courts—one in the Central District No. 1 and one in the Southern District—have been formed to administer Penal Law only within their competence and jurisdiction.

There were no serious cases of crime during the year. The Joint Court delivered four judgments concerning breaches of Joint Regulations and of the Convention of 1914, and dealt with one case of offences by a native against a non-native.

Police.

The policing of the Group is carried out by two separate forces of Armed Native Constabulary, British and French, each in the charge of a National Commandant under the orders of the respective Resident Commissioner. The headquarters are at Vila, small detachments are located at each of the District Agencies on the islands of Tanna, Malekula, and Santo, respectively, in order to assist the District Agents in the carrying out of their duties.

The British force is composed of natives recruited from the islands of the New Hebrides, and the French force partly of New Hebrideans and Loyalty Islanders. In addition, the French have enrolled a number of Tonkinese police, for the purpose of facilitating police operations among the Tonkinese coolies in the Group.

The duties of the native constabulary consist in the maintenance of law and order among the native population of the more civilised areas, general police and patrol work, the guarding of native prisoners, and the repression of native disorders.

Both the British and French Commandants, in addition to their duties as police officers to the Condominium, also act as police officers in so far as their own nationals are concerned, and are charged with the conduct of police cases before their respective national Courts.

The cost of the maintenance of the two forces is defrayed by the respective national Governments, except when the two corps are acting jointly, when the expenses are met from Condominium funds.

Natives of the islands are enlisted in the Police generally for periods of two years. Some re-engage; some do not; but it is safe to say that the two years spent under discipline is one of the most civilizing influences in the New Hebrides.

Prisons.

Each Government maintains its own national prison, which is situated in the town of Vila, and accommodation is provided for both natives and whites. The cost of maintenance of prisoners sentenced by the national tribunals is met from national funds, and that of natives sentenced by the Resident Commissioners and the native and mixed Courts, from Condominium funds.

There is no Condominium prison staff. Each Commandant acts as prison keeper and is responsible for the supervision of prisoners placed in his charge. He is assisted by police constables who act as warders.

In addition to the national prisons at headquarters, each District Agency is provided with a temporary lock-up in which natives under short sentences are confined.

The class of native prisoner with which the Administration is called upon to deal is almost exclusively confined to those sentenced for breaches of local liquor laws and offenders against the provisions of the Native Penal Code. Crime of a serious nature is rare, and criminality, as such, unknown.

Native prisoners are employed in works of general utility, such as the making and cleaning of roads, weeding Government paddocks, transport of material to various Government buildings, etc.

The daily average of native prisoners confined in the British prison was 3.4 and in the French prison 3.2. No deaths occurred

in the British prison. Generally speaking, the health of prisoners was good.

VII.—PUBLIC WORKS.

The Condominium maintains a Public Works Department, controlled by a Superintendent and an Assistant. Building material is imported from Australia. Dwelling houses are usually imported cut and ready for erection, as the supply of skilled artisans is very limited. Practically all buildings are constructed of wood, or galvanized iron, with wood or steel frames, owing to the frequency of earth tremors. The construction and maintenance of roads and bridges is carried out by local contracts in conjunction with the Works Department. Labour is difficult to procure and commands a high rate of wage. The expenditure on Condominium public works for the year under report amounted to approximately £2,960.

VIII.—PUBLIC HEALTH.

Climate.

The New Hebrides islands are classed as unhealthy. The climate, though very enervating, is not worse than that of many other tropical places. The year is divided up, generally speaking, into two seasons, the hot and wet season, commencing in November and ending in April, and the dry and cool season from May to October. Of late, however, the tendency is for the line of demarcation to become less clear, there being considerable periods of drought in the rainy season, and vice versa in the dry season. The temperature in the island of Efate ranges from a minimum of about 63° F. in the cool season to a maximum of about 89° F. in the hot. The hot season is the most unhealthy owing to the extreme humidity and the prevalence of mosquitoes. Also it is so enervating as to make recovery from an illness somewhat prolonged. The cool season is generally speaking healthy and very pleasant. The southern islands of the group are cooler and healthier than the northern—the latter being about 7° F. warmer on the average. Provided careful attention is paid to the general conditions of living, sufficient but not too much exercise taken, and moderation in habits is observed, a satisfactory state of health may be maintained. One of the chief enemies of good health at Vila is the scarcity of green vegetables and good quality fresh food. As a general rule it is desirable that a visit be taken to a temperate climate every two or three years, especially in the case of women and children. Children do not thrive in the New Hebrides and it is desirable that they should be sent away after the age of four.

Diseases.

Malaria is the principal disease. It is more prevalent in the northern islands than the southern, owing to the difference in climate and rainfall. Amoebic dysentery is endemic throughout

the year and epidemic in the hot season. Both these diseases are being combated with success by measures of sanitation. Blackwater fever occurs occasionally among Europeans. The indigenous population suffers chiefly from yaws, hookworm, malaria, and dysentery. The various hospitals in the group, both Government and Missionary, treat the natives for these complaints. The special campaign against yaws and hookworm, under the auspices of the Rockefeller Institute, is dealt with elsewhere.

Hospitals.

The following hospitals and medical aid posts are to be found :—

Tanna.—A well-equipped hospital run by the Presbyterian Mission and subsidized by the British Government.

Efate.—Two well-equipped hospitals at Vila; the John G. Paton Memorial Hospital, administered by the Presbyterian Mission and subsidized by the British Government, and the French Government hospital.

Epi.—A medical aid post in charge of an Annamite Medical Practitioner.

Malekula.—A hospital at Norsup run by private enterprise (Compagnie Cotonnière), and a medical aid post at Port Sandwich in charge of an Annamite Medical Practitioner.

Santo.—French Government hospital at the Segond Channel, recently extended and enlarged.

All these institutions are open to white residents, Asiatics, and natives, and do excellent work. The statistics for 1929 and 1930 in respect of the British and French hospitals at Vila are given below :—

Cases.	*British Hospital.*		*French Hospital.*		*Total.*
	Europeans.	*Natives and Asiatics.*	*Europeans*	*Natives and Asiatics.*	
In-patients—					
1929	39	342	201	2,191	2,773
1930	46	323	197	1,134	1,700
Out-patients—					
1929	23	300	1,400	4,500	6,223
1930	34	384	1,230	7,400	9,048
Total 1929 ...	62	642	1,601	6,691	8,996
„ 1930 ...	80	707	1,427	8,534	10,748
Deaths 1929 ...	2	16	8	88	116
„ 1930 ...	1	8	8	70	87

Sanitation.

Much has still to be done for sanitation in the New Hebrides. Vila, the capital town, is still without any sort of water works or drainage. The only source of water supply is the roofs of the houses. These form a catchment area from which water is collected in rainy weather into large galvanized iron tanks. In

periods of drought, water runs short and frequently has to be transported for some distance, for purposes other than drinking. The tank system has the disadvantage of providing breeding places for mosquitoes, unless adequately protected. It has, on the other hand, the advantage of providing an extremely pure source of drinking water which it is practically impossible to contaminate.

Most Europeans adopt the pit system of latrine, but nearly all the houses occupied by officials are now provided with septic tanks, which, with reasonable care, have proved the most satisfactory method available.

The Sanitary Service of Vila has continued to work satisfactorily and the improvement in conditions resulting therefrom is still more apparent than in 1929.

The Quarantine Station building was completed, but still has to be furnished and requires kitchens and outhouses. These are held up owing to lack of funds.

Report of the Condominium Medical Officer.

The general health of the Group has been satisfactory. There have been no epidemics and endemic diseases have not taken a severe form. The improvement in health generally is reflected in the lower total of hospital inmates—1,700 as against 2,773 for the preceding year. Sanitary measures adopted in respect of the town of Vila have had good results and a marked improvement is apparent in the cleanliness of the town.

Hookworm and yaws were treated with success under the auspices of the Rockefeller Institute.

Native Medical Welfare.

During the year 1930 the Rockefeller Foundation, in conjunction with the Condominium Government, continued the yaws and hookworm compaign in the Group. A very large percentage of the natives of the New Hebrides are infected with hookworm (ankylostomiasis), and yaws is almost universal.

The following areas were covered by the campaign during the course of the year :—

The islands of Epi, Lopevi, Ambrim, East, North and North-West Malekula, and small adjacent islands, Aoba and Central and North Maewo, leaving Erromanga, three villages of Efate, South-West and Central-West Malekula, Toman, Santo and adjacent small islands, South Maewo, Pentecost, and the Banks and Torres Islands, to complete the Group. A number of lectures on simple hygiene was given and causes and prophylaxis of the chief native diseases explained. Natives offered themselves for treatment in very large numbers and it is estimated that a very small percentage have not been treated. The natives are fast realizing the benefits to be derived therefrom. The appended table gives statistics of the work performed.

In conjunction with the Rockefeller Foundation, the Condominium Government is also maintaining two students at the Suva Medical School, who, when qualified, will be attached to the Condominium medical staff for native medical work in the New Hebrides.

At the present time there are four European qualified Medical Officers in the Group who devote themselves to native medical welfare, in so far as the exigencies of their duties permit, and who receive an allowance from the Condominium Government for that purpose. One of them carries out the duties of Medical Inspector for natives and makes periodical tours in the Group for that purpose.

STATISTICAL REPORT ON WORK DONE FOR THE RELIEF AND CONTROL OF HOOKWORM DISEASE AND YAWS IN THE NEW HEBRIDES FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31ST DECEMBER, 1930.

Islands.	*Census.*	*Given Hookworm Treatment.*	*Examined for Yaws.*	*No. with Yaws Lesions.*	*Given Injections for Yaws.*		
					1st.	*2nd and 3rd.*	*Total.*
Lopevi	141	117	139	99	133	98	231
Central S.W. and N.E. Epi.	479	462	477	363	471	391	862
Epi Tonkinese ...	498	486	—	—	488	323	811
Port Vato and Balap, Ambrim.	784	740	786	682	767	708	1,475
W. and N.W. Ambrim	1,328	1,220	1,328	1,194	1,274	1,182	2,456
Malekula :—							
Port Sandwich ...	178	142	178	153	165	165	330
Sakau Island	20	20	20	18	18	18	36
Maskelyne Island ...	112	—	112	92	107	—	107
Apok	52	—	52	40	49	—	49
Natives in vicinity of Coates' and Lançon's Plantations.	224	224	224	216	216	216	432
Tonkinese	211	211	—	—	211	106	317
Natives, Banon B. ...	91	80	91	86	86	86	172
Oloua	211	195	211	172	201	201	402
Onua and Pangkumu...	496	180	496	470	471	266	737
Bushman's Bay ...	205	179	205	198	198	172	370
Uripiv, Rano and Walla Islands, and Litzlitz, Tautu, and Pinalumb.	928	682	889	613	842	730	1,572
Lingam's Plantation...	62	—	62	61	61	61	122
Wowo	66	—	66	64	64	—	64
Atchin	437	300	437	316	410	360	770
Vao	332	—	332	165	307	250	557
Tonkinese	566	535	—	—	566	42	608
N. and N.W. Malekula	612	547	612	572	590	573	1,163
Aoba	3,902	3,502	3,902	2,993	3,620	3,858	7,478
Maewo	514	470	514	429	501	192	693
Total... ...	12,449	10,272	11,133	8,996	11,816	9,998	21,814

IX.—EDUCATION.

There are no schools controlled or supported by the Condominium Government, nor are there any facilities for European children to receive anything but a primary education, which is not of a very high standard.

The town of Vila has three schools (1) a school for girls, supported and controlled by the Sisters of the Sacred Heart Mission; (2) a boys' school, supported and controlled by the Marist Mission; and (3) an infants' school, run by the French Government. Admission to these schools is not restricted to the children of European parentage and the entrance fees are purely nominal.

The British and French Missions in the Group have various good schools and training institutions for the benefit of the natives. The Presbyterian Mission maintain an excellent school at Tangoa, South Santo, and can accommodate up to sixty pupils. They also maintain other schools throughout the Group. The Melanesian Mission have a good school at Lolowai, Aoba, and schools in the Banks Group. The Seventh Day Mission have a utilitarian school at Aore Island, Santo, which is equipped with modern machinery for teaching all kinds of woodcraft. The Marist Mission also maintain schools in various islands of the Group.

All these institutions carry out excellent work among the natives and deserve commendation.

X.—LANDS AND SURVEY.

Land owned by white settlers in the New Hebrides was acquired originally from native owners, either by purchase or barter. Ownership at the present day is based on these native deeds, but such deeds do not constitute a valid title until judgment has been pronounced upon them by the Joint Court. The procedure in regard to obtaining titles to land in the New Hebrides is set out in Articles 22 to 27 of the Protocol of 1914. Approximately 1,000 claims have been lodged at the Joint Court, representing an area of approximately 2,150,000 acres.

Up to the close of the year under report 85 indefeasible titles had been granted, all or the island of Efate. The speed with which titles are granted is dependent to a large extent on the land surveys of the properties affected and the claims of opposing applicants for title. A staff of surveyors is attached to the Court, but, owing to the nature of the country and the large tracts of land which require checking and surveying, progress is necessarily slow. In the grant of land titles, due consideration is given to the requirements of the indigenous population, and, when necessary, reserves are set aside for them. An official Native Advocate is appointed by the two Governments to assist the natives in any disputes with white claimants. The Torrens system of land title has been adopted in the New Hebrides.

XI.—LABOUR.

Indigenous labour for agricultural purposes is insufficient to meet the requirements of settlers, and considerable difficulty is often experienced in securing sufficient number of hands in the busy season.

Owing to the low prices realized for produce, chiefly copra, during 1930, a larger number of natives than has been the case in recent years have offered their services to settlers on short terms or as casual labourers. Indentured labour has been as scarce as in former years, and the native attitude generally towards lengthy engagements is as pronounced as ever.

There has been a marked decrease in the rate of wage paid to indigenous labour, except at Vila where the rate averages 5s. per day and food for local labourers.

The employment of natives under contract is regulated by the provisions of the Anglo-French Protocol of 1914, and by additional national legislation in the case of British settlers.

The inadequate supply of labour for local French undertakings was met by the French authorities by the introduction in 1921 of Tonkinese coolies from French Indo-China. At the beginning of 1930 there were some 6,000 Tonkinese in the Group, but their numbers have been decreased by repatriations of time-expired labourers to approximately 5,500.

The term of contract is five years with the option of re-engagement for further terms of one or two years or repatriation at the end of the term. The Tonkinese makes a good labourer, but it is generally conceded that he is not equal to the New Hebridean as an all-round worker, although perhaps superior in work requiring the use of intelligence.

XII.—POPULATION.

Non-Native.

A statement is appended giving details of the non-native population of the Group.

Description.	*British.*			*French.*		
	Adult Males.	*Females and Children.*	*Total.*	*Adult Males.*	*Females and Children.*	*Total.*
Nationals	120	99	219	410	521	931
Foreigners opted under Convention.	9	4	13	19	—	19
Asiatics opted under Convention.	28	—	28	68	—	68
Protected subjects and citizens:						
Tonkinese ...	—	—	—	3,590	1,263	4,853
Javanese ...	—	—	—	21	19	40
Chinese... ...	—	—	—	50	—	50
Totals ...	157	103	260	4,158	1,803	5,961

Native.

The natives are Melanesians, but in places there is a mixture of Polynesian blood.

The conditions of the Group do not permit of any reliable census of the native population. The total is probably not more than 60,000 and in general the population is on the decrease. The following gives an approximate estimate of the more thickly populated islands.

Malekula, 9,000; Pentecost, 7,000; Santo, 7,000; Tanna, 6,500; Aoba, 6,000; Ambrym, 5,000; Epi, 3,000; and Efate, 1,700.

XIII.—METEOROLOGICAL.

No violent disturbances occurred during the year. The table below shows the rainfall at four stations in the Group for 1930, and the mean annual for the past five years:—

Year.	*Dillons Bay (Erromanga).* 18·47 S. 168·58 E.	*Port Vila (Efate).* 17·44 S. 168·18 E.	*Hog Harbour (East Santo).* 15·05 S. 167·67 E.	*Port Patterson (Vanua Lava, Banks Is.).* 13·50 S. 167·34 E.
1926	62·34	73·06	133·34	137·50
1927	59·77	74·26	134·41	143·42
1928	47·51	72·03	135·62	142·12
1929	64·17	80·51	136·81	140·62
1930	52·80	54·98	98·50	101·55
Mean Annual for five years ...	57·32	70·97	127·73	133·04

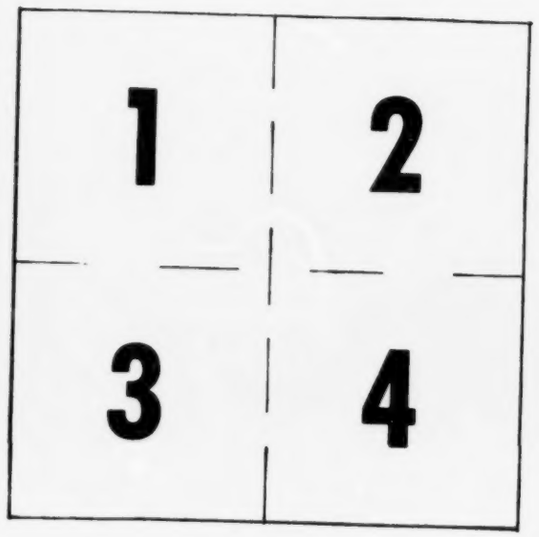
R. D. BLANDY,
Acting Resident Commissioner.

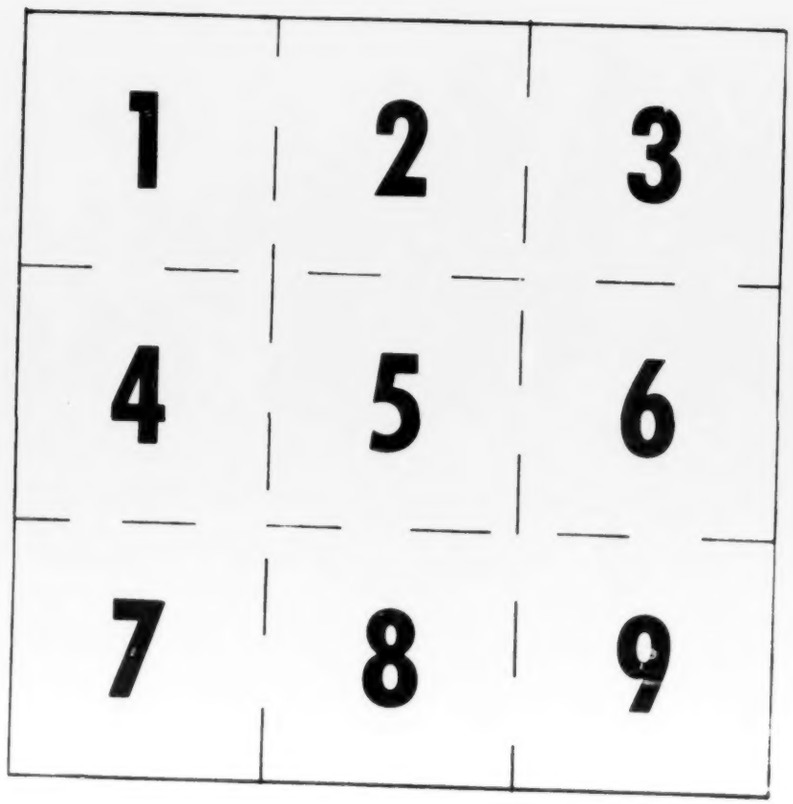
BRITISH RESIDENCY,
VILA, NEW HEBRIDES,

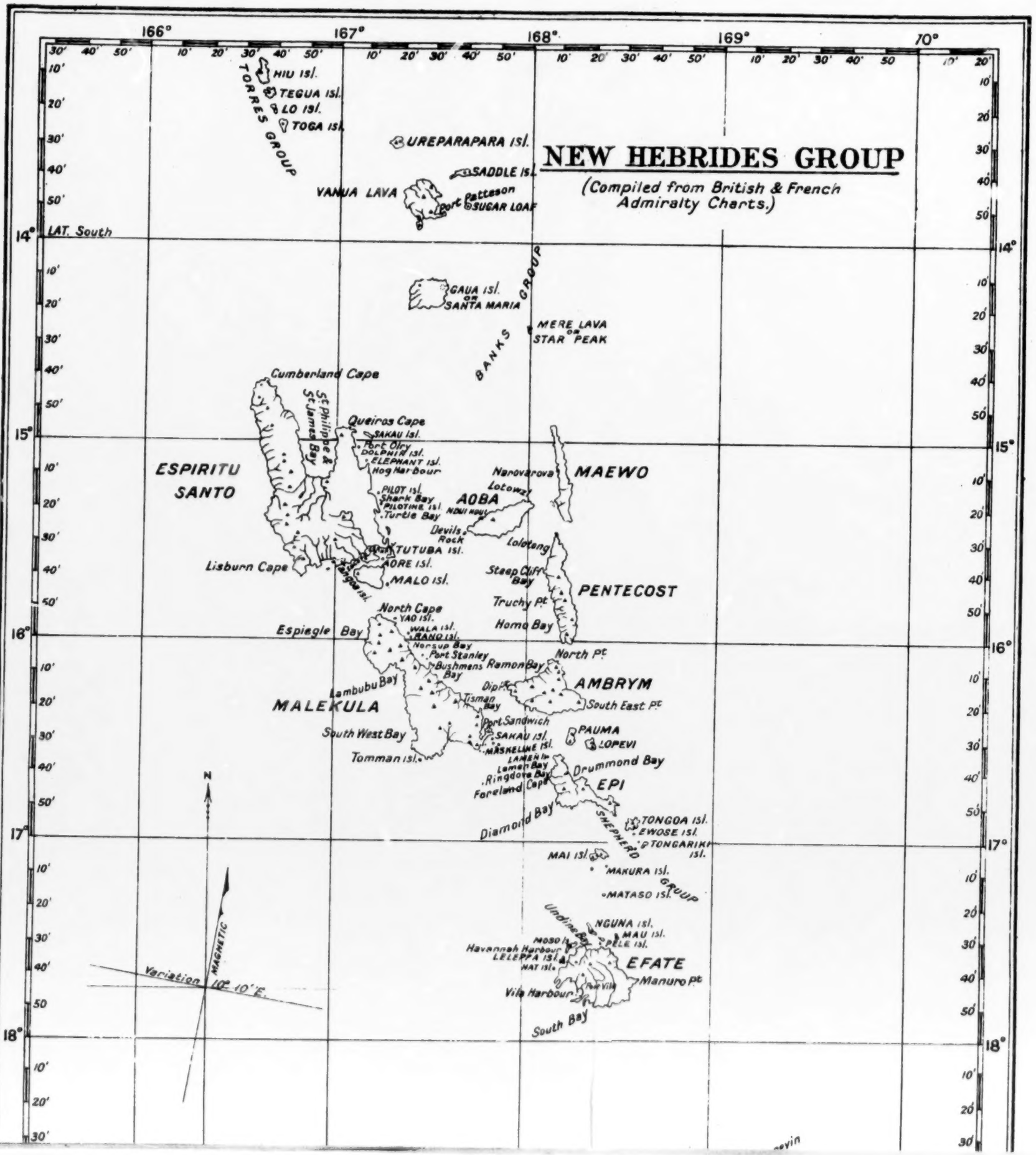
15th April, 1931.

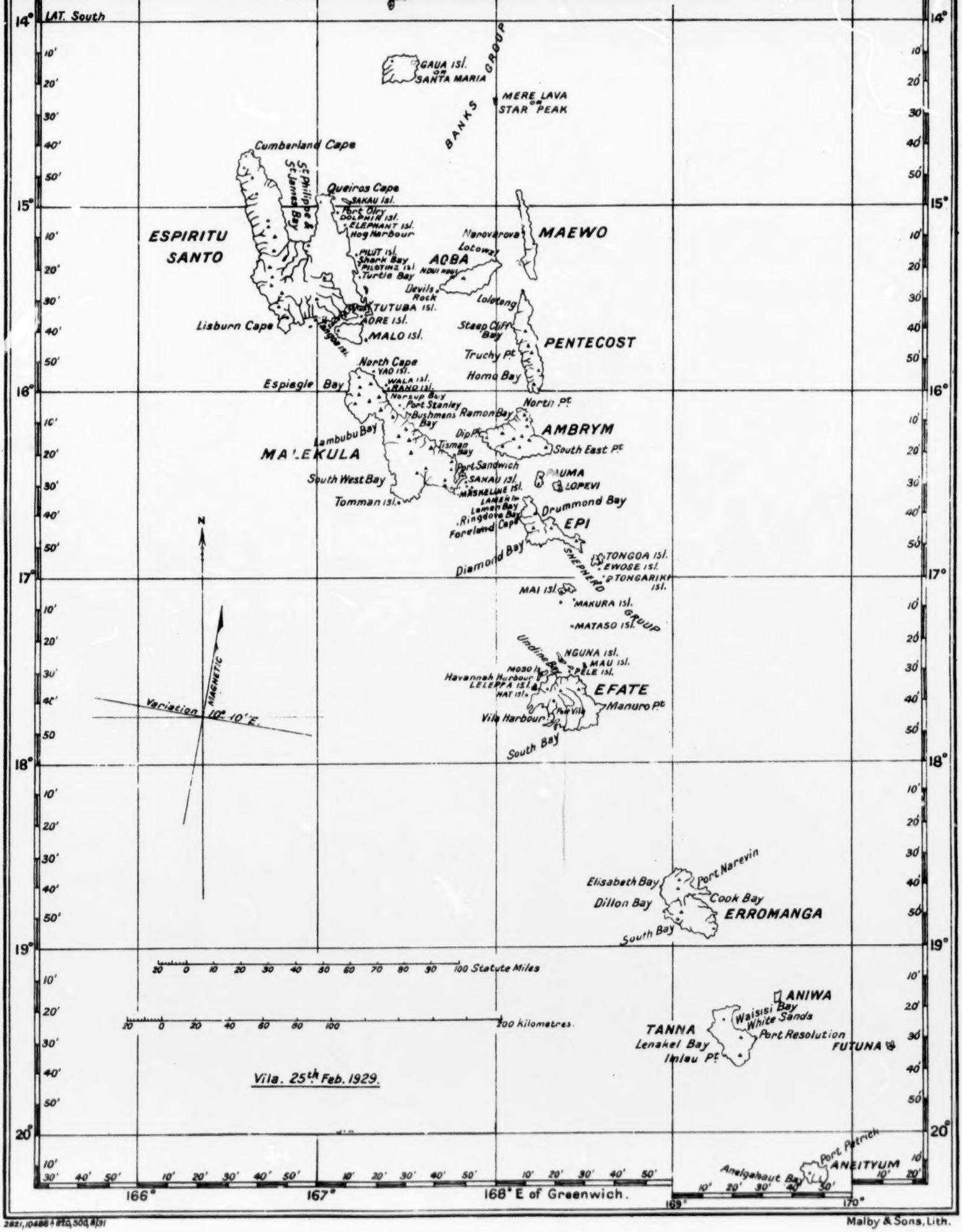
(11540—21) Wt. 10488—820 500 9/31 P. St. G7/8

Maps on this order too large to be entirely included in one exposure are filmed clockwise beginning in the upper left hand corner, left to right and top to bottom as many frames as required. The following diagrams illustrate the method.






NEW HEBRIDES GROUP
(Compiled from British & French Admiralty Charts.)
166°
167°
168°
169°
170°
14° LAT. South
15°
16°
17°
18°
TORRES GROUP
HIU Isl.
TEGUA Isl.
LO Isl.
TOGA Isl.
UREPARAPARA Isl.
SADDLE Isl.
VANUA LAVA
Port Patteson
SUGAR LOAF
BANKS GROUP
GAUA Isl. or SANTA MARIA
MERE LAVA
STAR Pk
Cumberland Cape
St Philippe & St James Bay
Queiros Cape
SAKAU Isl.
Port Olry
DOLPHIN Isl.
ELEPHANT Isl.
Hog Harbour
ESPIRITU SANTO
PILOT Isl.
Shark Bay
PILOTINE Isl.
Turtle Bay
Lisburn Cape
TUTUBA Isl.
AORE Isl.
MALO Isl.
Espiegle Bay
North Cape
YAO Isl.
WALA Isl.
RANO Isl.
Nonsup Bay
Port Stanley
Bushmens Bay
Lambubu Bay
MALEKULA
South West Bay
Tomman Isl.
Narovarova
MAEWO
Lotowzy
AOBA
NOUI NOUI
Devils Rock
Lolotang
Steep Cliff Bay
Truchy Pt
PENTECOST
Homo Bay
North Pt
Ramon Bay
AMBRYM
Dip
Tisman Bay
South East Pt
Port Sandwich
SAKAU Isl.
PAUMA
LOPEVI
MASKELINE Isl.
LAMEN Is
Lamen Bay
Ringdove Bay
Foreland Cape
Drummond Bay
EPI
Diamond Bay
SHEPHERD
TONGOA Isl.
EWOSE Isl.
TONGARIKI Isl.
MAI Isl.
MAKURA Isl.
MATASO Isl.
GROUP
Undine Bay
NGUNA Isl.
MAU Isl.
PELE Isl.
MOSO Is
Havannah Harbour
LELEPPA Isl.
HAT Isl.
EFATE
Manuro Pt
Vila Harbour
Port Vila
South Bay
N
MAGNETIC
Variation 10° 10' E.



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ANNUAL REPORT ON THE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC PROGRESS OF THE PEOPLE OF THE NEW HEBRIDES, 1931

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CHAPTER I.

GEOGRAPHY, CLIMATE, AND HISTORY.

Geography.

The New Hebrides lie between the 13th and 21st degrees of South latitude, and the 166th and 170th degrees of East longitude, and are of an area of roughly 5,700 square miles.

The Group includes those of the Banks and Torres, the former lying a few miles due north of the main Group, and the latter about 40 miles to the north-west of the Banks, the whole forming an irregular double chain some 440 miles in length.

The largest island of the Group is Santo, of an area of approximately 1,500 square miles, and a coastline of about 200 miles. The southern and western sides are very mountainous and rugged, some of the ranges rising to a height of over 6,000 feet. The next largest island is Malekula, which although very much broken up by mountain ranges is not so mountainous as Santo.

Other larger islands in their order of importance are Efate, Ambrym, Erromanga, Epi, Aoba, Pentecost, and Maeovo, and Gaua and Vanua Lava of the Banks Group. In addition to these are some 80 small islands and islets.

There are three active volcanoes in the Group situated on the islands of Tanna, Ambrym, and Lopevi, respectively. The first two are in a constant state of eruption, and the last named somewhat quiescent, emitting smoke and vapour at irregular intervals.

The Group possesses four good harbours, Vila and Havannah Harbours situated on the island of Efate, and Ports Sandwich and Stanley on Malekula, besides a number of good sheltered anchorages such as the Segond Channel and Pallicollo on Santo, Ringdove Bay on Epi, The Maskelynes off South Malekula, Undine Bay on Efate, and Anelgahaut on Aneityum.

The Headquarters of the Administration are situated on the shores of Vila Harbour, which is also the chief commercial centre of the Group. Other important settlements are located at Epi, Malekula, and the Segond Channel, Santo.

The Group is generally well watered. On the larger islands are several small rivers navigable to boats and small motor craft for a distance of some miles. The only lake of any size in the Group is found on top of the island of Gaua in the Banks Group, and is some four miles in circumference.

Climate.

The New Hebrides islands are classed as unhealthy. The climate, although very enervating is not worse than that of many other tropical places. The year is divided up, generally speaking, into two seasons, the hot and wet season, commencing in November and ending in April, and the dry and cool season from May to October. Of late, however, the tendency is for the line of demarcation to become less clear, there being considerable periods of drought in the rainy season and vice versa in the dry season. The temperature in the island of Efate ranges from a minimum of about 63° F. in the cool season to a maximum of about 89° F. in the hot. The hot season is the most unhealthy owing to the extreme humidity and the prevalence of mosquitoes. Also it is so enervating as to make recovery from an illness somewhat prolonged. The cool season is, generally speaking, healthy and very pleasant. The southern islands of the Group are cooler and healthier than the northern—the latter being about 7° F. warmer on the average.

History.

The New Hebrides Group was discovered by the Spanish explorer de Quiros in the year 1606. Under the impression that he had at last found the long-sought Southern Continent, the quest for which occupied the navigators of this period, he called it " Tierra Australis del Espiritu Santo." He anchored in a large bay to which he gave the name of St. Philip and St. James, and on the shores of a river flowing into that bay he established the settlement of La Nuova Jerusalem. To the port which undoubtedly existed in those days he gave the name of Vera Cruz. This island is to-day known as Santo. Owing to sickness, and dissensions with the natives the

settlement was soon abandoned, and to-day, so far as is known, no traces of it exist. The port of Vera Cruz has likewise disappeared, nor can its original site be traced along the 40 odd miles of coastline forming the bay.

Nothing more was heard of the Group until some 160 years later, when in 1768, the French navigator Bougainville passed to the southward of de Quiros's discovery, and sailed between the islands known to-day as Santo and Malekula, thus disproving de Quiros's claims to the discovery of the great Southern Continent. The strait through which he passed still bears his name. On the same voyage he discovered the islands of Pentecost, Aoba, and Maeovo, to which he gave the name of the Cyclades.

It remained, however, for the great navigator Captain Cook to discover and chart the greater part of the Group in the year 1774, when, entering the Group from the north, he sailed to the southward, discovering and naming the majority of the islands which form the southern chain of the Group. It is recorded that among other places visited he spent some fifteen days in the then snug little harbour of Port Resolution on the island of Tanna. Since those days, however, the floor of the harbour has risen, and where Captain Cook anchored in four fathoms of water, to-day a small launch will scarcely float.

Among other early visitors may be cited Laperouse who is supposed to have visited the Group in 1788; and d'Entrecasteaux, who came in search of Laperouse in 1793.

In the same year the Banks Islands were sighted by Bligh on the occasion of his famous voyage in an open boat to Timor after the mutiny of the *Bounty*.

Dumont d'Urville, Belcher, and Markham, are among the early voyagers whose accounts of these islands are of interest.

By virtue of the Anglo-French Convention of 16th November, 1887, whereby, among other things, each nation agreed not to exercise a separate control over the Group, a Joint Naval Commission was appointed, consisting of the respective Captains and two officers from each of the two warships which then paid periodical visits to the Group. The Commission was charged with the protection of the lives and property of the subjects of the two nations—France and England—in the islands.

By the year 1895 a number of British and French subjects had settled in the Group and the necessity was felt for some jurisdiction to deal with their disputes, in consequence of which an Arbitration Court was established by the colonists, but the Joint Naval Commission pronounced its veto and the Court was dissolved.

In 1902 the Group had assumed sufficient importance to necessitate the appointment of Resident Commissioners to deal with such judicial cases as came within their jurisdiction. In 1902 the first British Resident Commissioner was appointed, the French Government having a short time previously appointed a similar officer.

CHAPTER II.

GOVERNMENT.

By the Convention of 20th October, 1906, between the United Kingdom and France, British-French Condominium Government was established. The executive consists of a British and French Resident Commissioner acting in concert, assisted by a staff of officers. The Administrative Departments of the Condominium are staffed by officers of both nationalities who are subject to the control of the Resident Commissioners acting jointly. Each Power retains sovereignty over its own nationals. The seat of Government is at Vila on the island of Efate. Condominium Agents of both nationalities are established on various islands of the Group and are allotted areas of control. The executive must in all cases reach joint agreement in decisions affecting the administration of the Condominium. The principal Condominium judicial body is the Joint Court which is composed of a British and a French Judge with a President of neutral nationality. The joint services include finance, posts and telegraphs, customs, public health, lands registry and public works.

The Convention of 1906 has been superseded by the Convention of 6th August, 1914, which was ratified in 1922.

The British and French Resident Commissioners are subordinate to their respective British and French High Commissioners. The British High Commissioner is stationed at Suva, and the French High Commissioner at Noumea.

CHAPTER III.

POPULATION.

The population of the New Hebrides is composed of some forty to sixty-thousand natives, and 4,534 non-natives. A statement is appended giving details of the non-native population.

Description.	*British.*			*French.*			*Totals.*
	Adult Males.	*Females and Children.*	*Total.*	*Adult Males.*	*Females and Children.*	*Total.*	
Nationals	129	98	227	320	471	791	1,018
Foreigners opted under Protocol.	14	6	20	43	2	45	65
Asiatics opted under Protocol.	29	1	30	35	—	35	65
Protected subjects and citizens*—							
Tonkinese ...	—	—	—	3,300			
Javanese ...	—	—	—	42			
Chinese	—	—	—	44		3,386	3,386
Totals ...	172	105	277	398	473	4,257	4,534

* *Note.*—Totals only available.

The primitive state of the New Hebrides precludes the taking of any reliable census of the indigenous population. In certain islands which have been under missionary influence for a number of years it is possible to make a fairly accurate estimate of the inhabitants, but in the more uncivilized islands such as Malekula, Pentecost, and Santo, whose interiors are almost a closed book, it is not possible to form more than a rough estimate of their numbers.

Malekula is credited with the largest population of some 9,000 natives; Santo and Pentecost come next with about 7,000 each, Tanna 6,500, Aoba 6,000, Ambrym 4,000, Epi 2,500, and Efate 2,000. Among the smaller islands whose population is worthy of note may be cited Paama with just over 2,000, and Tongoa with 1,300 inhabitants.

In general the native population of the Group is on the decline, but in recent years the islands of Tanna, Paama, and Tongoa have shown a slight tendency to an increase. In this connexion it is interesting to note that the natives of these islands appear to be endowed with a keener commercial acumen that their fellows, which, entailing a necessarily increased activity, may have some bearing on their present immunity from decline.

CHAPTER IV.

HEALTH.

The following is an abridged report on the health of the Group by the Chief Condominium Medical Officer :—

"Pendant l'année 1931 l'état sanitaire a été bon aux Nouvelles-Hébrides — pas d'épidémic durant l'année. Le paludisme est en regression depuis que le Service d'Hygiène fonctionne normalement et régulièrement.

Il-y-a eu peu de dysenterie excepté a Tanna où des mesures énergiques sont actuellement prises pour enrayer l'amibiase.

L'ankylostomiase est soignée sur toutes les plantations systématiquement.

Le pian diminue de plus en plus depuis que la plupart des indigènes ont été soignés. Dès le debut d'une nouvelle poussée de pian, les injections incessantes sont faites.

Le nombre de médecins actuellement aux Hébrides permet de lutter victorieusement contre toutes les maladies.

Depuis le fonctionnement de l'assistance médicale du Condominium, les indigènes viennent plus nombreux près des médecins. Ils comprennent mieux qu'il est de leur intérêt de se soigner le plus tôt possible.

D'une manière génèrale depuis que des mesures d'hygiène ont été prises dans toutes les îles et surtout à Port-Vila la santé publique est beaucoup meilleure et grâce â l'appui que nous avons toujours reçu des deux Gouvernements conjoints, nous avons pu arriver à des résultats déjà très intéressants et notre tâche a été ainsi grandement facilitée."

Medical Institutions.

There are eight European doctors in the Group, four hospitals, and two medical aid posts. The location of the hospitals and aid posts is as follows :—

Southern Islands.

Tanna.—A well-equipped hospital run by the Presbyterian Mission, assisted by a grant from British funds. A British medical practitioner is in charge of the hospital. A Presbyterian missionary with medical training is also resident on the island, and a French medical officer has been recently posted at Tanna.

Central Islands.

Efate.—There are two excellent hospitals at Vila; the John G. Paton Memorial Hospital administered by the Presbyterian Mission and assisted by a grant from British funds, and the French Government Hospital. These hospitals have trained European staffs and are in the charge of qualified medical officers.

Epi.—There is a medical aid post on this island, and a European doctor ministers to the medical welfare of the population.

Malekula.—The French Cotton Company have established a hospital at Norsup and a European medical officer is in charge. At Port Sandwich there is a medical aid post supervised by an Annamite medical practitioner.

Northern Islands.

Santo.—The French Government have established a hospital in the Segond Channel with a European medical officer in charge.

All these institutions are open to the indigenous population as well as white residents and Asiatics. The Condominium Government gives free medical treatment to all indigent natives.

The following is the report of the Medical Superintendent of the Paton Memorial Hospital, Vila, for the year under review :—

> " During the year ended 31st December, 1931, 640 patients were treated. Of these 295 were in-patients and 345 out-patients. As usual January and February were the busiest months of the year, all the patients reporting then were suffering from malaria and abscesses, and septic sores were more common than at any other time of the year.
>
> Twenty-nine cases of amoebic dysentery were treated. The majority of these came in during the five months immediately following the hot season. House flies were much more abundant than usual at that season and no doubt contributed largely to the prevalence of the disease. Three of the cases were fatal. All were treated with emetine and most received an iodine preparation, yatren, by mouth in addition.
>
> Great numbers of cases of chronic ulcers of the legs come in for treatment and all seem to benefit by injections of novarsphenamine. Acriflavine, 1 in 1,000 solution, as a moist dressing, has proved easily our most effective treatment and is relied on almost entirely now.

It is with satisfaction that we find the native women coming into hospital more freely for confinement. During the year nineteen maternity cases were admitted, seventeen being natives.

Over 500 injections of novarsphenamine were given, 240 of these in the local villages which were each visited twice during the year. Free treatment was given in the villages for hookworm.

Erromanga was visited four times, each visit extending over four days. There, over 300 injections were given for yaws. In the early part of the year an epidemic of dysentery broke out amongst the natives in the southern part of that island and about 70 cases were reported to have been fatal.

An attempt has been made to train some of the native boys in simple medicine. Two have completed the course and one of these has returned to his village and attends all the sick daily. The villagers pay him £12 annually for his services. The other boy has remained on at this hospital as dresser. A boy from Erronmanga is now undergoing instruction with a view to his attending the sick on his island."

The following give statistics of the two hospitals at Vila for 1930 and 1931 :—

Cases.	*British Hospital.*		*French Hospital.*		*Total.*
	Europeans.	*Natives and Asiatics.*	*Europeans.*	*Natives and Asiatics.*	
In-patients—					
1930	46	323	197	1,134	1,700
1931	32	263	131	689	1,115
Out-patients—					
1930	34	384	1,230	7,400	9,048
1931	58	287	840	7,425	8,610
Total 1930 ...	80	707	1,427	8,534	10,748
„ 1931 ...	90	550	971	8,114	9,725
Deaths 1930 ...	1	8	8	70	87
„ 1931 ...	1	11	7	28	47

Diseases.

Malaria is the principal disease. It is more prevalent in the northern islands than the southern, owing to the difference in climate and rainfall. Amoebic dysentery is endemic throughout the year and epidemic in the hot season. Both these diseases are being combated with success by measures of sanitation. Blackwater fever occurs occasionally among Europeans. The indigenous population suffers chiefly from yaws, hookworm, malaria, and dysentery. The various hospitals in the Group, both Government and Missionary, treat the natives for these complaints.

Sanitation.

Sanitation in the islands of the Group is only in the early stages of development but some progress has been made at Vila, the

capital, during the past few years. The water-supply is rain water collected into large tanks with which all houses are equipped. This system has the disadvantage of providing breeding places for mosquitoes unless adequately protected or periodically treated with kerosene oil. On the other hand, it provides a pure source of supply and cases of water contamination are extremely rare.

All Government houses in Vila are supplied with septic tanks which, with reasonable care, prove satisfactory, otherwise the pit system of latrine is adopted by most residents.

The disposal of refuse is undertaken under Condominium arrangements and disposed of by incineration. Since the inauguration of this service the general appearance of the town of Vila has greatly improved.

Sanitary legislation provides for the inspection of all meat tendered for human consumption, and for the inspection of private and public premises. A Government quarantine station has been established on the north side of the entrance to Vila Harbour.

Medical campaign against hookworm and yaws.

This campaign which commenced in 1928 with a view to eradicating these two diseases from which the natives suffer, was terminated during the year under report. The number of treatments for hookworm during the campaign was 27,699, and in the case of yaws 28,897. There is no doubt but that the campaign has had a most beneficial effect on the native population of the Group.

CHAPTER V.

HOUSING.

Houses occupied by Europeans in the Group are usually of the one storey bungalow type of two or more rooms surrounded by verandahs. They are generally constructed of wood and galvanized iron. Owing to the frequency of earthquake shocks buildings of brick, stone, or concrete, are not favoured.

In the more civilized areas natives are gradually adapting themselves to European ideas of construction, and a marked improvement in native dwelling houses is noticeable in villages adjacent to Vila.

In the outlying islands, mission natives favour dwelling houses constructed of lime mortar, which is a great improvement on the grass humpy of former days, and far more comfortable and sanitary.

The non-mission or heathen native still clings to the insanitary grass or leaf shelter accommodating the whole of his family, and more often than not his pigs and dogs. But with the gradual advance of civilization this system is discarded in favour of the more substantial dwellings above mentioned.

The building of houses, etc., in the town of Vila is governed by the provisions of a Town Conservancy Regulation which requires all plans of projected buildings to be passed by a Sanitary Commission.

Periodical inspections of the town are undertaken by the said Sanitary Commission, and a permanent refuse removal squad is responsible for the removal every day of kitchen refuse, etc., and the cleanliness of the public roads. Under the provisions of the same Regulation, householders are bound to keep their premises in good order, clean, and free of weeds and undergrowth.

CHAPTER VI.

PRODUCTION.

The chief products of the Group in their order of importance are copra, cocoa, cotton, and coffee. Copra is the most important item, the value of the crop for 1931 amounting to £69,886. The value of cocoa produced was £31,435, cotton £9,833, and coffee £5,712. Local consumption of these products is negligible owing to the lack of demand, the whole crop being exported.

In addition to the main items of produce mentioned above small quantities of maize and wool are produced and exported ; similarly sandalwood, trochas, and snail shell are exported.

A small sheep station running some 2,000 to 2,500 sheep has been in successful operation on the island of Erromanga for some years. Good prices are realized for the wool.

Cattle raising in the Group is not resorted to as an industry. Cattle thrive well and are bred on a small scale generally throughout the Group, principally on account of their food value, and their usefulness in keeping plantations free from grass and undergrowth, thus permitting a considerable economy in plantation hands which would otherwise be required for this purpose.

With the exception of copra, of which about one-sixth is produced by native owners of small plots of coco-nut trees, the products above mentioned are grown entirely on European-owned plantations, some of them the property of individual owners, others owned by important companies such as the Société Française des Nouvelles-Hébrides, Société Cottonnière, and Etablissements Hagen, all of which have large interests in the Group.

Plantations are worked by British settlers with indigenous labourers partly under contract and partly as free or casual labourers. French settlers employ the same class of labour to a large extent, but they are mainly dependent on Tonkinese coolies imported for French settlers by the French authorities.

On British plantations the ratio of non-contract as against contract labourers is roughly 2 to 1, and on French plantations 7 to 1. At the end of 1931 there were 3,200 Tonkinese coolies in the Group under contract to French settlers.

The maximum period of contract for indigenous labourers is three years, but with the growing popularity of the casual labour system, these lengthy terms are becoming more and more rare ; the native prefers short contracts, or if possible, no contract at all. The usual term of contract for imported Tonkinese coolies is five years.

All native labour is subject to the control of the Administration. Conditions of employment are governed by the labour provisions of the Protocol of 1914, in addition, British settlers are subject to the provisions of separate legislation containing additional restrictions to those provided in the Protocol.

No mining, fishing, or manufacturing industries exist in the Group.

Other than about a dozen Tonkinese and Chinese market gardeners in the neighbourhood of the town of Vila whose produce is all consumed locally, there are no cultivations, plantations, or industries worked or owned by persons of non-European descent.

CHAPTER VII.

COMMERCE.

General.

The New Hebrides soil and climate are excellent for the propagation and growth of all tropical products. So far planters have specialized in copra, coffee, cocoa, and cotton. The climate is such that all these could be of first-class quality, as, indeed, some are. The lack, however, of up-to-date and scientific methods of preparation together with the absence of an agricultural department have resulted in some of the New Hebrides products acquiring but a fair reputation in the South Seas.

The general downward trend of prices has caused planters to search for other and more remunerative products, and attention is now being given to the possibilities of castor oil, tung oil, and tobacco, the latter being under the auspices of the French. The first tentative exports of castor oil seed were made during the year.

Other products exported are trochas and burghaus shell, sandalwood, maize, hides, bêche-de-mer, and wool.

There are considerable quantities of cattle in the islands, raised with a view to keeping down vegetation on plantations and to feed labour. Hides are a by-product and not an industry. The export of bêche-de-mer depends entirely on the demand from China. The quality is said to be good. There is no pearl shell in the islands. Wool is grown successfully on one of the southern islands, but sheep do not flourish in the northern part of the Group.

There are many good trees such as kauri, island teak, sandalwood, and many useful hardwoods of different varieties, but, as yet, these have been little exploited owing to lack of markets and financial difficulties.

An attempt is now being made to organize the export of bananas and oranges to New Zealand. Both fruits grow profusely and are of good quality.

It is said that the New Hebrides are rich in mineral wealth, as yet unexploited. Deposits of coal and sulphur are known to exist and traces of other minerals have been reported.

Large tracts of fertile agricultural land are still untouched, awaiting more favourable times and security of tenure.

Exports.

Comparative Table in Tons and Sterling.

Produce.	1927. Tons.	1927. Value. £	1928. Tons.	1928. Value. £	1929. Tons.	1929. Value. £	1930. Tons.	1930. Value. £	1931. Tons.	1931. Value. £
Copra	10,204	204,090	12,682	208,954	10,787	147,460	11,885	130,573	10,005	69,886
Cocoa	2,344	140,697	1,422	77,685	2,047	89,088	2,265	73,444	1,505	31,435
Cotton	*501	40,170	551	43,468	329	31,700	480	26,880	387	9,833
Coffee	123	4,842	96	5,534	100	6,530	125	7,892	131	5,712
Trochas and Burghaus shell.	86	4,299	61	2,627	57	2,980	55	2,721	102	2,053
Maize	118	949	303	2,277	482	4,355	455	3,670	52	298
Sandalwood	23	[illegible]	54	898	49	957	98	1,978	24	492
Wool	5	601	22	2,453	8	963	16	1,257	9	412
Cotton seed	880	880	1,198	1,210	657	1,060	476	591	1,063	1,286
Hides	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	22	349
Castor Oil seed	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	21	121
Coco-nuts	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	61	182
Bêche-de-mer	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	9	104
Miscellaneous	63	1,116	336	975	†643	1,139	†607	1,514	276	30
Totals	14,347	£398,028	16,725	£346,081	15,159	£286,232	16,460	£250,520	13,667	£122,193

* Ginned.

† Includes by-products of raw cotton and uncleaned coffee.

COMPARATIVE TABLE OF PRICES OF RAW PRODUCE.

	1930.	1931.
	£	£
Copra	11 per metric ton.	7 per metric ton.
Coffee	45 ,, ,,	35 ,, ,,
Cocoa	32 ,, ,,	21 ,, ,,
Cotton	56 ,, ,,	25 ,, ,,
Maize	8 ,, ,,	5·7 ,, ,,
Trochas	52 ,, ,,	24 ,, ,,
Burghaus	12 ,, ,,	10 ,, ,,
Wool	79 ,, ,,	47 ,, ,,

The statistics for the year 1931 show the inevitable repercussions of the continuation of the depression in prices of raw products. Whereas, normally, an increased production could have been expected in these islands owing to the opening up of new plantations, yet, in spite of an otherwise favourable agricultural year free from serious cyclonic disturbance or pests, 1931 showed a decrease of nearly 3,000 tons (19 per cent.) in production.

Natives to a great extent have abandoned copra making, and planters have had to limit their labour to the minimum necessary to garner and prepare the products of their old trees in full bearing. Cleaning of plantations has had to be considerably curtailed, the crops being smaller in consequence. Cocoa growers have been unable to afford the usual protective measures against rats and vermin. Considerable areas of cotton were abandoned and one company specializing in this article had virtually to close down, keeping only 50 out of its erstwhile 500 labourers. Maize was not in demand and was only grown for local use. Coffee kept up its production chiefly owing to the bounty given by the French Government.

The share of produce exported by British firms and planters was 29 per cent. and 24 per cent. for tonnage and value respectively.

Imports.

COMPARATIVE TABLE OF IMPORT VALUES.

Year.	*British currency.*	*French currency.*	*Remarks.*
	£	*Francs.*	*Converted at*
1924	92,201	7,929,327	francs 86=£
1925	217,863	22,004,232	francs 101=£
1926	197,840	30,457,405	francs 154=£
1927	307,939	38,184,562	francs 124=£
1928	374,797	46,474,828	francs 124=£
1929	300,035	37,204,343	francs 124=£
1930	157,541	19,535,138	francs 124=£
1931	79,997	9,919,635	francs 124=£

COMPARATIVE TABLE OF CHIEF IMPORTS.

	Value.	
	1930.	1931.
	£	£
Beer	968	1,150
Benzine (petrol)	7,761	3,238
Biscuits	1,234	780
Tinned goods and groceries ...	8,362	2,720
Cartridges	1,170	280
Tobacco	5,363	5,545
Cement	1,685	780
Lubricating oils	1,952	1,285
Spirits	1,706	1,635
Tinned milk	1,476	1,050
Kerosene	3,600	2,520
Rice	22,661	11,254
Flour	6,137	2,815
Sugar	2,420	1,610
Soap	1,141	843
Tinned fish	1,883	1,180
Wines (fine)	1,980	1,010
Wines (ordinaire)	4,346	4,096
Gunny bags	2,830	4,857
Building materials	6,612	3,561
Agricultural machinery, boats, motor cars...	2,210	674
Potatoes	1,000	456
Tea	—	1,240

Imports for 1931 were valued at £79,997 as against £157,541 for 1930, and £300,035 for 1929. The effect of the depression of produce prices and the consequent inability to pay for imports has been accentuated by the insolvency of some French planters and companies following on prolific borrowing for purposes of expansion during the days of prosperity which preceded the slump. The result is that practically the whole of the French earnings are absorbed to pay interest and consequently imports have had to be cut down to the barest necessities of life. Accessory causes have been the repatriation of large numbers of Tonkinese, all potential consumers of imported articles, and the financial position of the natives, formerly one of the chief markets for "trade."

It must be admitted, however, that one cause of the drop in import values has been the reduction in the price of many imported articles, due to exchange rates and other economic causes. These causes have assisted importations from Australia, and to some extent from the United Kingdom, at the expense of the trade with France and America. Most of the importations of both French and British firms are, indeed, now from Australia, the chief articles being flour, spirits, beer, fine cigarettes, tinned meats and fish, potatoes, wines, butter, tinned milk, ship's biscuit, sugar, rice, groceries of all kinds, piece-goods, soap, onions, haberdashery, clothing, etc. Many of these articles formerly came almost exclusively from France. Australian light table wines have been becoming increasingly popular, owing to both quality and price as compared with the French wines habitually imported.

The principal importing firms are (British) Messrs. Burns, Philp (South Sea) Company, Limited, (French) Les Comptoirs Françaises des Nouvelles-Hébrides, la Compagnie Franco-Hébridaise, Les Etablissements Hagen, and Messrs Gubbay Frères. Importations by other companies have been substantially decreased for financial reasons and most firms have been compelled to reduce their staffs.

There is now only one trading steamer in the Group, belonging to Messrs. Burns Philp. The French inter-island vessel no longer carries a trade-room, but acts as a cargo and mail steamer on a fixed itinerary. Besides the above there are a large (French) auxiliary schooner and a number of launches and cutters which engage in trade.

There are three large stores in Vila, one of which is British; in addition there are numerous small shops in the hands of Japanese and Chinese traders. There are two large stores at Segond Channel, Santo, both French.

CHAPTER VIII.

WAGES AND COST OF LIVING.

Labour and Wages.

Native Labour.

Native labour may be divided into three main classes.

(*a*) Plantation labour, boats' crews of local small vessels, employees of traders, Government messengers, Constabulary, etc., on contract and otherwise.

(*b*) Domestic labour.

(*c*) Casual labour, working on steamers, wharves, Government works, etc.

During the year labour has been plentiful, though the native attitude generally against contract service for lengthy periods has been as pronounced as ever. Employers of all classes, however, have been able to obtain their requirements without difficulty, owing entirely to the depressed prices of island produce.

By nature the native of the New Hebrides is lazy and of mercurial temperament. He will not work unless circumstances compel him. His wants are less simple than formerly as he has become accustomed to European food and clothing. When times are good labour is exceedingly scarce and dear, as the majority of natives can obtain all they want by the sale of the produce of their lands, and with a minimum of exertion. When times are bad, like the present, the point arrives when the native, having exhausted his hoarded savings, cannot, without a very great deal of exertion himself, obtain the luxuries he desires. He is then faced with the choice of work on his own account, which is unpalatable, or, on the other hand, with either reverting to his natural state in the matter of food (of which there is plenty) and clothing or working for wages. This stage was reached during the course of 1931. The result was that while employers found no difficulty in obtaining labour, the production of native-made copra has fallen off to a very considerable extent. As native savings also began to be exhausted, traders have found it difficult to obtain a living, there being no money to buy their wares.

Domestic labour remains by comparison difficult to secure, as the native, neither male nor female, takes kindly to this form of service and can rarely be prevailed upon to stay with an employer for an extended period. For this reason the New Hebridean servant is not efficient, and can rarely be trained to the finer domestic arts.

Wages of most classes of native labour have undergone some reduction, but not in ratio to the depression of prices. During the year the current rates of wages were :—

Class (*a*)—	
Plantation labourers	£1 to £2 per month with food and clothing, whether under engagement or not.
Boats' crews	
Traders' employees ...	
Government messengers ...	£3 per month without food.
Constabulary	From £2 per month with food and clothing.

Note.—Casual labour is frequently employed on plantations for picking cotton and seasonal crops on a daily wage from 1s. 6d. to 3s. with or without food, according to arrangement.

Class (*b*)—	
Domestic labour	£1 to £2 10s. 0d. per month with food and clothing, whether engaged or not.
Class (*c*)—	
Casual labour	4s. to 6s. 6d. per day with or without food and according to skill.

The employment of natives under engagement of any kind is governed by the provisions of the Protocol of 1914, and in the case of British dependents also by national legislation.

Asiatic Labour.

Asiatic labour consists of—

(*a*) Indo-Chinese coolies imported under contract for the use of French settlers by the French Government. These Tonkinese are, generally speaking, satisfactory, being of a superior intelligence to the native, if not so physically strong, and are naturally hard workers. They receive approximately 120 francs per month per head, plus food, clothing, lodging, etc. The cost to the settler is now considerably higher than that of native labour as, in addition to wages, he is charged for the cost of transportation to and from Indo-China, Government inspection, and medical surveillance, etc. Owing to the depression a large number have been repatriated, there remaining at the end of the year some 3,000 against 5,500 at the end of 1930. There are also a very few Javanese and Chinese under contract.

(*b*) Free Chinese and Japanese labour of the artisan class. These are only a handful and work on daily wages which are unfixed and depend partly on skill and partly on demand. Such wages vary from 10s. to 18s. *per diem*. There are also a few Chinese employed as stewards and cooks on inter-island steamers at rates varying from £3 to £6 per month with rations.

Cost of Living.

There is no standard by which the cost of living of native or Asiatic labour can be usefully compared. The vast majority of labourers are, however, provided with the necessaries of life by their employers, who thus stand the variations of the market.

As regards the official class, the standard of living, which it is necessary to maintain in the interests of health in the New Hebrides, must be as high as circumstances permit. At Vila, the seat of Government, living is considerably more expensive than in other parts of the Group as there are few facilities for the individual to maintain gardens or keep live stock. Lately the dearth of fresh vegetables has been somewhat alleviated by the starting of market gardening by a few Asiatics and planters. Such are obtainable in fair quantity and of fair quality for about two-thirds of the year at prices which vary from moderate to expensive according to season. Fresh meat is obtainable, but is not always of good quality. Fresh milk can now be obtained from planters with regularity. Fish is very rarely obtainable and is of poor quality. A certain amount of ready-made clothing, hosiery, boots, etc., can be purchased locally, but most wearing apparel must be obtained from Australia or Europe. Australian prices have decreased appreciably for such articles. Practically all perishable commodities are imported from Australia.

Retail prices in general have shown some decline, but towards the close of the year the cost of a number of local commodities rose, owing to their being purchaseable in francs or on a franc basis.

The following table gives the average retail prices of staple articles during the year :—

Fresh milk	8d. to 10d. per quart.
Flour	2½d. to 3d. per lb.
Rice	1½d. to 2d. per lb.
Sugar	2½d. per lb.
Potatoes	2½d. to 3d. per lb.
Fresh meat	8d. to 1s. 4d. per lb.
Onions	3d. per lb.
Butter	1s. 9d. to 2s. per lb.
Tea	2s. 6d. to 3s. per lb.
Coffee	3s. per lb.
Eggs	2s. 6d. to 6s. per dozen.
Poultry	4s. to 8s. each.
Tinned meat	1s. to 2s. per lb.
Wood fuel	5s. to 6s. 6d. per cubic metre.
Kerosene	7s. 6d. to 8s. 6d. per tin (4 gallons).
Petrol	9s. 6d. to 10s. 6d. per tin (4 gallons).

CHAPTER IX.

EDUCATION AND WELFARE INSTITUTIONS.

There are no schools controlled or supported by the Condominium Government, nor are there any facilities for European children to receive anything but a primary education, which is not of a very high standard.

The town of Vila has three schools: (1) a school for girls, supported and controlled by the Sisters of the Sacred Heart Mission ; (2) a boys' school, supported and controlled by the Marist Mission ; and (3) an infants' school, run by the French Government. Admission to these schools is not restricted to the children of Europeans and the entrance fees are purely nominal.

The British and French Missions in the Group have various good schools and training institutions for the benefit of the natives. The Presbyterian Mission maintains an excellent school at Tangoa, South Santo, and can accommodate up to sixty pupils. They also maintain other schools throughout the Group. The Melanesian Mission have a good school at Lolowai, Aoba, and schools in the Banks Group. The Seventh Day Adventist Mission have a utilitarian school at Aore Island, Santo, which is equipped with modern machinery for teaching all kinds of woodcraft. The Marist Mission also maintain schools in various islands of the Group.

All these institutions carry out excellent work among the natives and deserve commendation.

The task of educating the New Hebridean has been left in the hands of the various mission bodies operating in the Group ; but in order to appreciate the inestimable services rendered by these missions

in educating and civilizing the wild inhabitants of these islands a short sketch of missionary endeavour will be of assistance.

The island of Erromanga was the scene of the first essay to wean the native from heathenism, when in the year 1839 John Williams and Harris, under the auspices of the London Missionary Society landed at Dillons Bay, and in the same year were killed by the natives in whose welfare they strove.

It was not until 1857 that any further attempt was made to bring civilization to the Erromangans. In that year the Reverend G. N. and Mrs. Gordon took up the work, but were subsequently murdered by the natives, to be followed by Gordon's brother, who perished in the same manner. The Gordons were followed by Mr. and Mrs. McNair. Mr. McNair died on the island and was followed by the Reverend Doctor Robertson, who, after many years of danger and hardship had the satisfaction of seeing the whole island under the civilizing influence of Christianity when he left the Group in 1920.

Erromanga is well named "The Martyrs' Isle."

In 1842 an endeavour was made by Messrs. Turner and Nisbet to convert the Tannese, but their efforts were not attended with success, and after a few months they were forced to flee, barely escaping with their lives. Sixteen years later the Reverend Doctor J. G. Paton took up the work on Tanna, but owing to the hostility of the natives was compelled to abandon the island after four years. He settled on the adjacent island of Aniwa, where his efforts were attended with every success. Tanna was afterwards occupied by the Reverends Watt and Neilson, whose work materially contributed to the subjugation of the warlike Tannese.

About the year 1850 the control of the missions passed into the charge of the various Presbyterian Church Bodies in the Colonies, and in later years the more northern islands of the Group were endowed with missionaries. The following names figure prominently in the list of those devoted men and women who in the early days braved the hardships and dangers of this Group in the task of claiming its inhabitants for civilization; The Reverend Milne of Nguna; Doctors Mackenzie and Macdonald of Efate; Michelsen of Tongoa; Smail and Fraser of Epi; Morton and Watt-Leggatt of Malekula; Annand and Mackenzie of Santo.

Other workers in the New Hebrides mission field include the Catholic, Melanesian, Church of Christ, and Seventh Day Adventist denominations.

The Catholic Mission was first established on the island of Aneityum in the year 1848, but their stay was not of long duration and the attempt was soon abandoned. They returned to the Group however in 1887, and since that date their influence has gradually extended to the whole Group with the exception of the southern islands, and the Banks and Torres.

The Melanesian Mission was in the field about the year 1850, and by agreement with the Presbyterian Missions the northern part of the Group comprising Aoba, Pentecost, Maeovo, and the Banks and Torres, as yet untouched by the Presbyterians, was abandoned as a Melanesian Mission sphere of influence.

It was on Aoba Island in the year 1905 that the Reverend Godden of this Mission, the latest of mission martyrs at native hands, was brutally murdered by a native of that island.

In 1912 the Seventh Day Adventists started operations on Efate, but later transferred their activities to Ambrym, Malekula, and Santo.

In the task of civilizing the native the importance of education was never lost sight of. Each mission village had its school, where the rudiments of reading and writing were imparted to young and old. To-day there are four good central schools, in addition to the mission station schools, where facilities are provided for primary education of the native. Of these the Training Institution established many years ago by the Presbyterian Mission at Tangoa renders excellent services in fashioning from the raw material teachers in whose care is confided the task of education. Another invaluable institution of this nature is the Melanesian Mission school on Aoba. The Catholic Mission school at Vila also renders good services in this direction. The year 1925 saw the Seventh Day Adventists installed on the island of Aoré, where natives from all parts of the Group, in addition to their scholastic studies, receive practical instruction in various arts and crafts.

Apart from the good educational work achieved by the missions, there is the equally important and beneficial medical work undertaken by the Presbyterian Mission, about which much could be written. A few years ago this denomination maintained no less than four well-equipped hospitals in the Group. To-day there are two, one at Tanna and the other at Vila. These hospitals are primarily intended for native patients, but their services are no less appreciated by white sufferers. The hospital established at Dip Point, Ambrym, under the superintendence of Doctor Bowie, to whose skill and kindness, not only hundreds of natives but many Europeans alive to-day owe their lives, will always be remembered in connexion with missionary endeavour in this Group. This hospital, in the year 1913, was engulfed, together with the adjoining mission station and native villages, in the tremendous volcanic outburst on that island, and to-day, where the hospital stood, is nothing but a shallow lake.

The Mission hospital at Vila was opened in 1912—a commodious well appointed building standing on the small island of Iririki in Vila Harbour—and is indeed a boon to native, Asiatic, and European alike.

Tanna hospital has been in existence over 25 years and its beneficial services are well known and appreciated by all.

CHAPTER X.

COMMUNICATIONS AND TRANSPORT.

Shipping.

Europe.—A two-monthly service of the Messageries Maritimes line is maintained between the terminal points of Dunkirk and Noumea (New Caledonia), via Vila, on both inward and outward voyages. The route is via Tahiti, Panama, Martinique, and Marseilles, and the period of the voyage approximately 65 days between Vila and Marseilles. The following vessels are engaged in this service :—*Ville de Verdun*, *Boussole*, *Astrolabe*, *Ville de Strasbourg*, *Recherche*, and *Esperence*.

Australia.—The S.S. *Morinda* (Burns Philp line) and the S.S. *Laperouse* (Messageries Maritimes) maintain five-weekly communications with Sydney, New South Wales—the former via Norfolk and Lord Howe Islands on the outward voyage from Sydney, and via Norfolk Island, Auckland (New Zealand), and Lord Howe Island on the homeward voyage, and the latter via Lifou, Loyalty Islands, and Noumea, New Caledonia.

Dutch Line.—A regular service is also maintained by the Royal Packet Navigation Company's steamer *Le Maire* between Saigon and Noumea, touching at Vila about every two and a-half months, via New Guinea, Papua, and Batavia.

New Caledonia.—Communication is maintained with Noumea by the S.S. *Laperouse* every four to five weeks, and by the Messageries line of steamers previously mentioned, approximately every two months. The French inter-island steamer also pays fairly frequent visits to Noumea.

Inter-Island.—The following steamers make monthly or five-weekly voyages round the Group. They have no fixed itinerary, but usually connect at Vila with the British or French mail vessels:—

S.S. *Malinoa* (Burns, Philp (South Sea) Company), S.S. *Saint Andre* (Messageries Maritimes).

The port of Vila is the port of entry in the Group. The tonnage entered and cleared during 1931 was as follows :—

ENTERED.

	Tons.	
British	22,080	(18 vessels).
French	88,973	(35 vessels).
Other	14,444	(9 vessels).
	125,497	

CLEARED.

	Tons.	
British	22,080	(18 vessels).
French	89,921	(35 vessels).
Other	14,444	(9 vessels).
	126,445	

Railways.

There are no railways proper in the Group. A two-foot rail track runs from the outskirts of Mélé to Vila—a distance of about four miles—and is used for various commercial purposes. The small wharves, privately-owned by the commercial houses in Vila, are also provided with rails for the transport of merchandise from the bulk store sheds.

Posts.

Mail communication from and to Europe and Australia is maintained by the mail steamers S.S. *Morinda* and S.S. *Laperouse*, which call at Vila and various island ports every five weeks. These lines are subsidized by His Majesty's Government in the Commonwealth of Australia and the French Government, respectively. The mails both inward and outward are sorted at Vila and rebagged for distribution round the Group by the inter-island steamers, which receive subventions from the Condominium Government for the services performed. The average time for European postal matter to reach Vila by the regular mail routes is 42 to 49 days. The Condominium Government has a postage stamp issue designed to represent the dual control. There are two sets of stamps—one British and one French. Both are inscribed in English and French currency.

The postal matter handled by the Vila Post Office for 1931 was as follows :—

	From or to British territory.		*From or to French territory.*		*From or to other places.*		*Total.*
	Received.	*Despatched.*	*Received.*	*Despatched.*	*Received.*	*Despatched.*	
Letters	24,000	20,000	60,000	40,000	3,000	2,000	149,000
Other articles ...	44,000	2,000	34,000	5,000	500	500	86,000
Registered articles ...	500	900	4,000	4,410	120	200	10,130
Totals ...	68,500	22,900	98,000	49,410	3,620	2,700	245,130

Radio-Telegraph.

There is no cable communication with the New Hebrides, but the Condominium Government maintains a radio-telegraph station at Vila, which is worked by British and French operators. The

call-sign is F J X and messages can be received and transmitted on the following wave-lengths :—

Receipts : 17 to 40 metres, 600 and 800 metres.
Transmissions : 26 to 37 metres, 600 and 800 metres.

The greater part of the traffic is with Noumea, New Caledonia. There is a daily service with Suva, Fiji. The terminal charge of the Vila Station is 3d. or 1 franc 50 centimes, per word.

A table is given below showing statistics for the year under report :—

Messages.	*Received.*	*Relayed.*	*Despatched.*	*Total.*
Government messages ...	743	60	808	1,611
Private messages	1,420	692	1,290	3,402
Totals	2,163	752	2,098	5,013

The Vila Station is now equipped with short-wave transmission and great improvement has resulted in communicating with the station at Suva.

Roads.

With the exception of the islands of Efate, Tanna, and Tongoa, there are very few public highways in the Group suitable for wheeled transport. Tanna has several good roads, one of which traverses the island. There is also a fair road on the island of Tongoa. Vila, the capital and seat of Government, has several good roads and these link up the outlying districts.

Telephones.

Telephone communication is established in the town of Vila and the outlying districts. The system is operated by a central exchange and the service is continuous. There are 60 telephones and 86 miles of wire. During the hurricane season the service is liable to interruption. There are no telephone systems in the other islands of the Group.

CHAPTER XI.

BANKING, CURRENCY, AND WEIGHTS AND MEASURES.

There are no banks in the New Hebrides. The Condominium Government carries out its banking operations through Noumea (New Caledonia) and Sydney (Australia). It has been the practice in the past for the larger British and French commercial houses to act as bankers for their clients, but the economic crisis coupled with shortage of cash and credit, has severely restricted local banking operations. The Banque de l'Indochine, at Noumea, issues a local note which circulates in the New Hebrides and is guaranteed by the Bank of France.

The currencies circulating in the New Hebrides Group are sterling, Australian and French currency. Owing to the departure of Australia and the United Kingdom from the gold standard, and the

variation in the rates of exchange of sterling and Australian currency, the position of the three currencies has become one of great complexity. The situation is aggravated by the lack of local banking facilities.

The Condominium Government adopts the rate of 124 francs to the pound sterling. Sterling therefore remains at gold parity with the franc for Government purposes, while Australian currency remains at the prevailing discount rate against sterling.

A factor which caused the Condominium Administration much concern throughout the year was the remarkable flow of United Kingdom silver coin into the Condominium Treasury, and the difficulty of its disposal without financial loss. The cause was mainly due to the domination of Australian silver throughout the Pacific, in consequence of which local commerce refused to recognize the premium on sterling silver as against Australian silver. As the Condominium Government recognizes the premium, most of the United Kingdom silver flowed into the Condominium chest. Quantities were also exported by commercial houses with a view to obtaining such premium as offered for United Kingdom silver outside the Group. This complication has not yet been overcome and although the situation has improved the Condominium Government still holds supplies of United Kingdom silver of which it finds difficulty in disposing.

The British and French systems of weights and measures are both employed throughout the Group.

CHAPTER XII.

PUBLIC WORKS.

The Condominium maintains a Public Works Department normally controlled by a Superintendent and an Assistant. Owing to depressed conditions of finance and the consequent unavoidable restriction of public expenditure one of these posts was not filled during the year. Public works were, therefore, restricted to the barest necessary repairs of roads and buildings.

In normal times building material is mostly imported from Australia. Dwelling houses and other buildings are all made of wood or galvanized iron owing to the prevalence of earth tremors. Building material is imported ready cut from Australia, as the supply of skilled artisans is limited.

The construction and maintenance of roads and bridges is carried out partly by the Public Works Department and partly by local contract under Public Works Department supervision. Metalled roads exist in Efate for a few miles round Vila. Labour in Efate is dear and difficult to obtain. There are unmetalled or semi-metalled roads in various parts of the Group, the best being those in the islands of Tanna and Tongoa, which have been made by the natives themselves to facilitate the cartage of produce to the

beaches. Such roads are comparatively easy of construction as the underlying hard coral is generally close to the surface and thus cartage of material is minimized. The chief difficulty in maintaining roads is the keeping down of bush.

The use of motor vehicles, and in some islands ox-wagons, has increased the importance of road construction. Most plantations now keep motor transport for their own use and maintain very fair motor ways within their own boundaries. These frequently link up with similar roads on adjoining properties. In this manner most of the existing public roads (now maintained by the Condominium) have come into being and it is probable that public roads and island arteries of the future will be similarly evolved.

The Public Works Department also maintains the harbour light system of Vila Harbour. This consists of an automatic lighthouse on Pango Point, which guides vessels to the mouth of Vila Harbour, and a pair of leading lights on the hills above the harbour which give a line to the deep water entrance. A green light shows the lateral margin of safety for large ships.

The expenditure on Condominium Public Works for the year 1931 was approximately £1,400 (as against £3,000 in 1930) and that on Harbour Lights about £120.

CHAPTER XIII.

JUSTICE, POLICE, AND PRISONS.

Justice.

The Convention of 1914 provided for the immediate introduction of three Courts, namely the Joint Court, and the French and British National Courts, and the subsequent formation of two others —Courts of First Instance and Native Courts.

The scope and functions of these Courts is briefly as follows :—

(1) *Joint Court.*—The Court is composed of a British and a French Judge, with a President of neutral nationality. There is also a Public Prosecutor and a Native Advocate. The Joint Court is a Court of final adjudication in matters of purely Condominium nature. Broadly speaking, and subject to certain exceptions, its civil jurisdiction is confined to certain proceedings in respect to rights over immovable property—its chief function being that of a land Court governing the registration of indefeasible titles to land. It may also settle cases between any parties, native or non-native, brought before it by consent of both. Its criminal jurisdiction, broadly speaking, is confined to offences—(*a*) connected with the recruitment of native labourers, or (*b*) committed by natives against non-natives, or (*c*) committed by natives against natives in areas where the Native Code is in force and involving a penalty of over one year's confinement, or (*d*) against the Convention or Joint

Regulations passed in pursuance thereof in areas where no Court of First Instance exists.

There is an appeal to the Joint Court from all judgments of Courts of First Instance and from important civil judgments of Native Courts. The Joint Court also has certain revisionary powers in criminal cases of Native Courts, and judgments of Courts of First Instance involving sentence of imprisonment.

(2) *Courts of First Instance.*—The composition of these Courts consists of a British and a French District Agent with a British or French Assessor chosen by lot. Their jurisdiction is over breaches of the 1914 Convention, or of Joint Regulations made thereunder, except those connected with the recruitment of native labour.

(3) *Native Courts.*—These are composed of either a British or French District Agent, assisted by two native Assessors. The British and French Agents preside over the Court in turns, month and month about. A necessary corollary to the full and complete functioning of these Courts is the promulgation in the area of the Native Code.

(4) and (5) *National Courts.*—The British and French Governments have established in the Group, in conformity with their existing legal systems, Courts with jurisdiction over all civil cases, other than those reserved to the Joint Court, and over all criminal cases in which a non-native is the defendant. In civil cases the jurisdiction over actions between non-natives belongs in some cases to the Court of the Power under whose law the contract was concluded, or the act or thing in question originated, and in other cases to the Court of the Power to which the defendant belongs. In criminal cases, non-natives are justiciable by the Court of their own nationality or the nationality applied to them.

Courts of First Instance have so far been set up in Central Districts Nos. 1 and 2.

A Code of Native Criminal Law has been instituted, and two Native Courts—one in the Central District No. 1 and one in the Southern District—have been formed to administer Penal Law only within their competence and jurisdiction.

There were no serious cases of crime during the year.

Police.

The policing of the Group is carried out by two separate forces of armed native constabulary, British and French, each in the charge of a National Commandant under the orders of the respective Resident Commissioners. The headquarters are at Vila, small detachments are located at the District Agencies on the islands of Tanna, Malekula, and Santo, respectively, in order to assist the District Agents in the carrying out of their duties.

The British force is composed of natives recruited from the islands of the New Hebrides, and the French force partly of New Hebrideans

and Loyalty Islanders. In addition, the French have enrolled a number of Tonkinese police, for the purpose of facilitating police operations among the Tonkinese coolies in the Group.

The duties of the native constabulary consist in the maintenance of law and order among the native population of the more civilized areas, general police and patrol work, the guarding of native prisoners, and the repression of native disorders.

Both the British and French Commandants, in addition to their duties as police officers of the Condominium, also act as police officers in so far as their own nationals are concerned, and are charged with the conduct of police cases before their respective national Courts.

The cost of the maintenance of the two forces is defrayed by the respective national Governments, except when the two corps are acting jointly, when the expenses are met from Condominium funds.

Natives of the islands are enlisted in the police generally for periods of two years. Some re-engage; some do not; but it is safe to say that the two years spent under discipline is one of the most civilizing influences in the New Hebrides.

Prisons.

Each Government maintains its own national prison, which is situated in the town of Vila, and accommodation is provided for both natives and whites. The cost of maintenance of prisoners sentenced by the national tribunals is met from national funds, and that of natives sentenced by the Resident Commissioners and the Native and Mixed Courts, from Condominium funds.

There is no Condominium prison staff. Each Commandant acts as prison keeper and is responsible for the supervision of prisoners placed in his charge. He is assisted by police constables who act as warders.

In addition to the national prisons at headquarters, each District Agency is provided with a temporary lock-up in which natives under short sentences are confined.

The class of native prisoner with which the Administration is called upon to deal is almost exclusively confined to those sentenced for breaches of local liquor laws and offenders against the provisions of the Native Penal Code. Crime of a serious nature is rare, and criminality, as such, unknown.

Native prisoners are employed in works of general utility, such as the making and cleaning of roads, weeding Government paddocks, transport of material to various Government buildings, etc.

The daily average of native prisoners confined in the British prison was 3·2 and in the French prison 3·5. No deaths occurred in the British prison. Generally speaking, the health of prisoners was good.

The following judgments, other than civil, were recorded by the various Courts :—

	Nature of Judgment.	
	Fine.	*Imprisonment.*
Joint Court	*2	4
Courts of First Instance	24	3
Native Courts	38	14
Resident Commissioners' Courts ...	19	63
British National Court	2	5
Totals	85	89

* Appeals from Court of First Instance, Central District No. 1.

CHAPTER XIV.

LEGISLATION.

The following Joint Regulations were brought into force during the year :—

No. 1 ... *The New Hebrides Fines Amendment Regulation No.* 1 *of* 1931.—This had the effect of bringing fines in previous legislation into conformity with the new parity rate of 124 francs to the pound sterling, as against the earlier rate of 25 francs.

No. 2 ... *The New Hebrides Increase of Fines Regulation No.* 2 *of* 1931.—This increased to the maximum fines provided under various Regulations, and is a corollary to Joint Regulation No. 1 of 1931.

No. 3 ... *The New Hebrides Export of Silver Amendment Regulation No.* 3 *of* 1931 annulled all restrictions on the export of silver currency. In view of the adverse balance of trade and the absence of banking and transfer facilities, the former restrictions were found to be a handicap to traders.

No. 4 ... *The New Hebrides Postal Services Prevention of Fraudulent Practices Regulation No.* 4 *of* 1931 punishes certain fraudulent practices as laid down in the Universal Postal Convention, Article 80.

No. 5 ... *The Licences Amendment Regulation No.* 5 *of* 1931 provides for a minor amendment of the Trading Licences Regulation No. 4 of 1930.

No. 6 ... *The New Hebrides Dwelling House Construction and Town Conservancy Regulation No.* 6 *of* 1931 revises and recasts former sanitary legislation and provides rules for the construction of new houses and outbuildings.

No. 7 ... *The New Hebrides Payment of Court Fees Amendment Regulation No.* 7 *of* 1931 contains a minor amendment to the English text of the original Regulation.

No. 8 ... *The New Hebrides Traffic Regulation No.* 8 *of* 1931 provides for the control of traffic, the issue of licences, the registration and control of vehicles of all kinds, and the control of animals on the public roads. It also provides for increased Pound fees.

No. 9 ... *The New Hebrides Motor Vehicles and Cycles Fees Regulation No.* 9 *of* 1931 makes provision for fees for licences and registration, and also annual taxation of vehicles.

No. 10 ... *The New Hebrides Motor Vehicles and Cycles Fees Amendment Regulation No.* 10 *of* 1931 makes a minor alteration in Joint Regulation No. 9 of 1931.

No. 11 ... *The New Hebrides Motor Vehicles and Cycles Fees Amendment Regulation No.* 11 *of* 1931 provides for special reduced taxation of commercial vehicles.

No. 12 ... *The New Hebrides Traffic Amendment Regulation No.* 12 *of* 1931 provides a special regime for demonstration of cars by bona fide agents.

No. 13 ... *The Pound Fees* 24 *Hours Moratorium Regulation No.* 13 *of* 1931 provides that Pound fees shall not be leviable until 24 hours after the admission of animals to the Public Pound.

No. 14 ... *The New Hebrides Medical Organization Regulation No.* 14 *of* 1931 provides for the organization and control of the Condominium Medical Service and the welfare of natives.

There exist no factory legislation, compensation for accidents, legislative provision for sickness, old age, etc., in the New Hebrides, except as far as is provided in the Protocol of 1914 and King's Regulation No. 1 of 1913, which govern the care of native labour. There are no factories or industries except agriculture in the New Hebrides.

CHAPTER XV.

PUBLIC FINANCE AND TAXATION.

By Article 5 of the Convention of 1914 each of the two Powers is required to defray the expenses of its own Administration in the Group. The cost of the joint services is defrayed out of local taxation. The joint services include finance, posts and telegraphs, customs, public works, ports and harbours, public health, the Joint Court and the Summary Courts, and lands registry. In the event of revenue from local taxation proving insufficient to meet jointly approved expenditure, the two Signatory Powers contribute

the deficit in equal proportions. Such contributions were required, for the first time since 1921, in the year under review, owing to the falling off in revenue due to the general commercial depression.

Revenue and Expenditure.

CONDOMINIUM REVENUE—

Year.	*French Currency. Francs.*		*British Currency. £*	*Remarks.*
				Converted at
1927	3,037,711	or	24,497	francs 124 = £
1928	3,463,551	or	27,932	francs 124 = £
1929	3,549,562	or	28,624	francs 124 = £
1930	2,402,829	or	19,378	francs 124 = £
1931*	1,380,380	or	11,132	francs 124 = £

CONDOMINIUM EXPENDITURE.

Year.	*French Currency. Francs.*		*British Currency. £*	*Remarks.*
				Converted at
1927	2,220,479	or	17,907	francs 124 = £
1928	3,568,404	or	28,777	francs 124 = £
1929	3,210,639	or	25,892	francs 124 = £
1930	3,509,011	or	28,298	francs 124 = £
1931*	3,029,263	or	24,429	francs 124 = £

* Partly estimated.

The chief sources of Condominium revenue are import and export taxes and port dues, which normally account for some four-fifths of the receipts. Other sources of income are postal and telegraphic receipts, Court fees and fines, survey fees, trading licences, taxes on vehicles, lands registry fees, and miscellaneous receipts.

The following is a brief table of the principal import duties :—

General merchandise unspecified ...	6 per cent. *ad valorem*.
Gramophones, records, perfumery, lace, rifles, revolvers, and cartridges.	20 ,, ,,
Spirits and tobacco	12 ,, ,,
Wines and petrol, lubricating and combustible oils.	5 ,, ,,
Kerosene	3 ,, ,,
Shotguns and cartridges, detonators	100 ,, ,,
Beer	6d. per gallon.
Dynamite	9d. per lb.
Fuse	2d. per 24 feet.

No duty is levied on the following articles :—live stock, books, cereals and seeds, ship's biscuit, fertilizers, medical appliances and drugs for hospitals, microscopes, plants, vaccines and lymphs, fresh vegetables and fruit.

The main heads of taxation and estimated yields for the year 1931 are tabulated as follows :—

	£
Inland Revenue (trading and other licences) ...	600
Post Office	500
Port dues	800
Court and survey fees	400
Import duties	6,000
Export duties	1,200
Wireless telegraph (gross)	900
Lands registry	100

EXPENDITURE ON SERVICES ENTIRELY BRITISH.

	£
1927–28	16,048
1928–29	11,966
1929–30	9,506
1930–31	10,314

This expenditure is defrayed from funds provided by Parliament on Civil Estimates, Vote for Colonial and Middle Eastern Services, Class II, 9. Certain miscellaneous receipts, such as Court fees and fines, and rent, totalling a few hundred pounds annually, are applicd in reduction of the Vote on which expenditure is provided for. The expenditure on British services includes, among other things, the personal emoluments of the British national staff, Police Force, and District Agents, and maintenance of houses of officers and police barracks.

The French Government maintains at national expense services similar to the above.

CHAPTER XVI.

MISCELLANEOUS.

Lands and Survey.

Land owned by settlers in the New Hebrides was acquired originally from native owners, either by purchase or barter. Ownership at the present day is based on these native deeds, but such deeds do not constitute a valid title until judgment has been pronounced upon them by the Joint Court. The procedure in regard to obtaining indefeasible titles to land in the New Hebrides is set out in Articles 22 to 27 of the Protocol of 1914. Approximately 1,000 claims have been lodged in the Joint Court representing an area of 2,150,000 acres, more or less.

Up to the close of the year 196 titles had been granted, all upon Efate and adjacent islands. It is expected to complete the registration of Efate early in the year 1932. The speed with which titles are granted is dependent to a large extent on the progress of land surveys of the properties affected and of the claims of opposing applicants for title.

A staff of surveyors is attached to the Court, but owing to the difficult nature of the country to be surveyed and identified, progress is necessarily slow. For financial reasons the staff of surveyors has recently been reduced.

In the grant of land titles due consideration is given to the needs of the indigenous population that may be occupying lands coming up for registration. The Court instructs its surveyors to report on such matters in the course of their work, and is guided by such reports in deciding the desirability or necessity of making native reserves. An official Native Advocate is appointed by the two Governments to watch over native interests in land matters and to bring to the notice of the Court instances of usurpation of land by settlers, as well as assist them in opposing claims actually before the Court. The Torrens system of land registration has been adopted in the New Hebrides.

Visits of Warships.

On 22nd June, H.M.S. *Laburnum* of the New Zealand Squadron (Commander C. E. Hotham, D.S.C., R.N.), flying the Flag of the High Commissioner for the Western Pacific, arrived at Vila and remained in the Group until 1st July. His Excellency Sir Murchison Fletcher, accompanied by Mr. Vaskess, Secretary to the High Commission, and Lieutenant T. B. Wardle, R.N., A.D.C., spent three days at the capital and then proceeded through the Group calling at the islands of Aore, Malo, Tangoa, and Santo.

On 18th September, H.M.A.S. *Canberra*, flying the Broad Pendant of the Commodore Commanding H.M. Australian Squadron (Commodore L. S. Holbrook, M.V.O., R.N.), arrived at Vila and remained in the Group until 21st September.

The French sloop *Bellatrix* visited the Group for a few days in May.

Atmospheric Disturbances.

A hurricane visited the island of Efate in March. Fortunately its maximum intensity was of short duration and not a great deal of damage was done to buildings and plantations. Otherwise the Group was free from violent atmospheric disturbances.

There was a minor eruption of the volcano Ambrym, consisting chiefly of cinders. No permanent damage was done, but many native gardens were burnt up and some relief had to be given by the Joint Administration.

G. A. JOY,
H.B.M. Resident Commissioner for the New Hebrides.

BRITISH RESIDENCY,
NEW HEBRIDES.
17th June, 1932.

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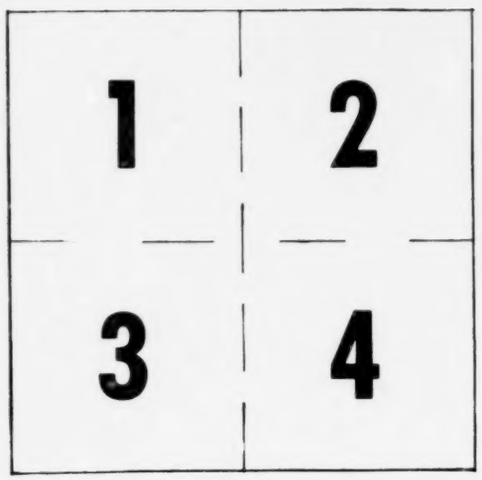

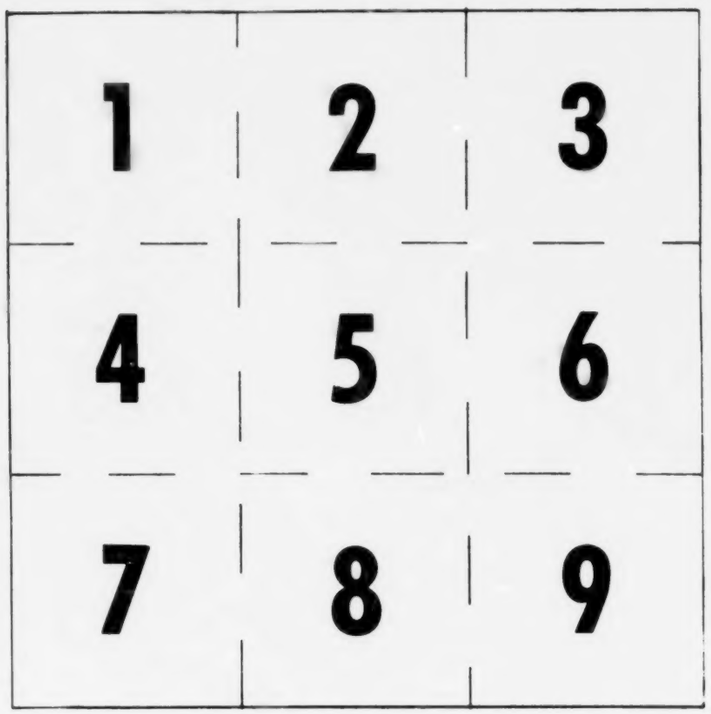

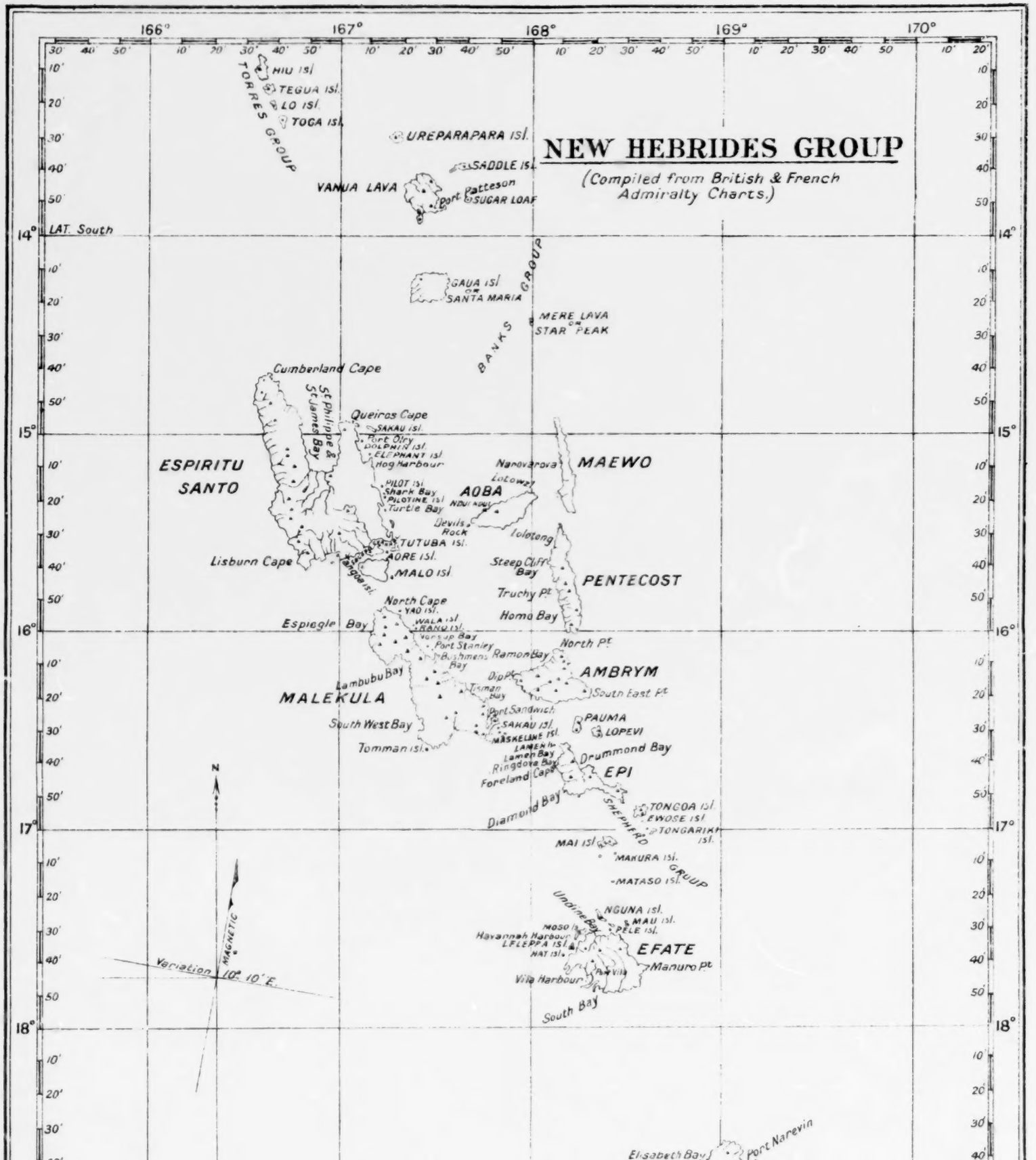
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(Compiled from British & French Admiralty Charts.)
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167°
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LAT. South
TORRES GROUP
HIU ISL
TEGUA ISL
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TOGA ISL
UREPARAPARA ISL
SADDLE ISL
VANUA LAVA
Port Patteson
SUGAR LOAF
GAUA ISL or SANTA MARIA
BANKS GROUP
MERE LAVA
STAR PEAK
Cumberland Cape
St Philippe & St James Bay
Queiros Cape
SAKAU ISL
Port Olry
DOLPHIN ISL
ELEPHANT ISL
Hog Harbour
ESPIRITU SANTO
PILOT ISL
Shark Bay
PILOTINE ISL
Turtle Bay
Nanovarova
Lotowai
AOBA
MAEWO
Devils Rock
TUTUBA ISL
AORE ISL
Lisburn Cape
MALO ISL
Tangoa ISL
Iolotong
Steep Cliff Bay
PENTECOST
Truchy Pt
North Cape
YAO ISL
WALA ISL
KANO ISL
Espiegle Bay
Homo Bay
Vorsup Bay
Port Stanley
Bushmens Bay
Ramon Bay
North Pt
AMBRYM
Lambubu Bay
Dip Pt
Tisman Bay
South East Pt
MALEKULA
Port Sandwich
SAKAU ISL
PAUMA
LOPEVI
South West Bay
MASKELYNE ISL
LAMEN Ha
Lamen Bay
Ringdove Bay
Foreland Cape
Drummond Bay
Tomman Isl
EPI
Diamond Bay
SHEPHERD GROUP
TONGOA ISL
EWOSE ISL
TONGARIKI ISL
MAI ISL
MAKURA ISL
MATASO ISL
Undine Bay
NGUNA ISL
MAU ISL
PELE ISL
MOSO ISL
Havannah Harbour
LELEPPA ISL
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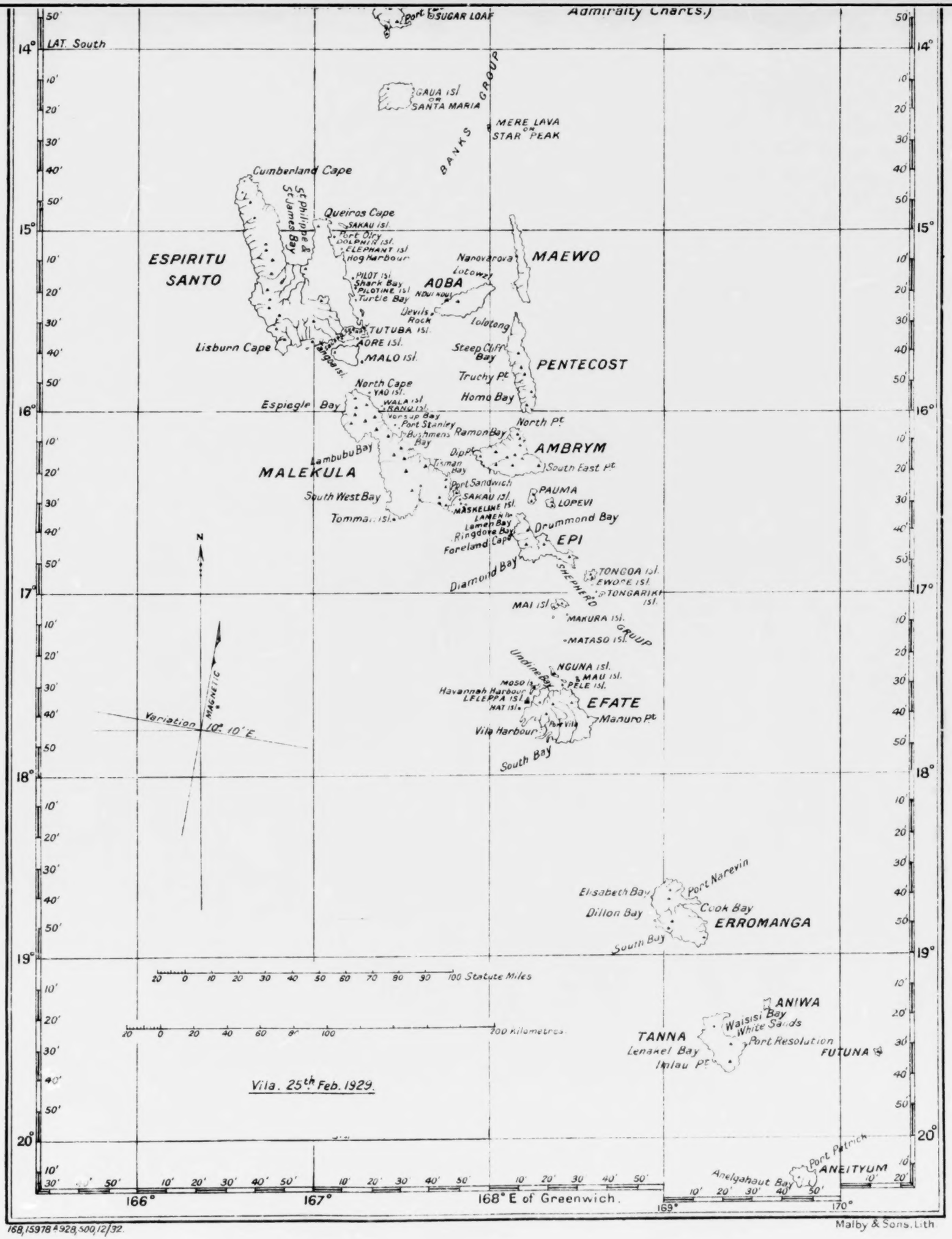
Elisabeth Bay
Port Narevin



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No. 1643

Annual Report on the Social and Economic Progress of the People of the

NEW HEBRIDES, 1932

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ANNUAL REPORT ON THE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC PROGRESS OF THE PEOPLE OF THE NEW HEBRIDES, 1932

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I.—GEOGRAPHY, CLIMATE, AND HISTORY.

Geography.

The New Hebrides lie between the 13th and 21st degrees of South latitude, and the 166th and 170th degrees of East longitude, and are of an area of roughly 5,700 square miles.

The Group includes those of the Banks and Torres, the former lying a few miles due north of the main Group, and the latter about 40 miles to the north-west of the Banks, the whole forming an irregular double chain some 440 miles in length.

The largest island of the Group is Santo, of an area of approximately 1,500 square miles, and a coastline of about 200 miles. The southern and western sides are very mountainous and rugged, some of the ranges rising to a height of over 6,000 feet. The next largest island is Malekula which, although very much broken up by mountain ranges, is not so mountainous as Santo.

Other larger islands in their order of importance are Efate, Ambrym, Erromanga, Epi, Aoba, Pentecost, and Maeovo, and Gaua and Vanua Lava of the Banks Group. In addition to these are some 80 small islands and islets.

There are three active volcanoes in the Group situated on the islands of Tanna, Ambrym, and Lopevi, respectively. The first two are in a constant state of eruption, and the last named somewhat quiescent, emitting smoke and vapour at irregular intervals.

The Group possesses four good harbours. Vila and Havannah Harbours situated on the island of Efate, and Ports Sandwich and Stanley on Malekula, besides a number of good sheltered anchorages such as the Segond Channel and Pallicollo on Santo, Ringdove Bay on Epi, The Maskelynes off South Malekula, Undine Bay on Efate, and Anelgahaut on Aneityum.

The Headquarters of the Administration are situated on the shores of Vila Harbour, which is also the chief commercial centre of the Group. Other important settlements are located at Epi, Malekula, and the Segond Channel, Santo.

The Group is generally well watered. On the larger islands are several small rivers navigable to boats and small motor craft for a distance of some miles. The only lake of any size in the Group is found on top of the island of Gaua in the Banks Group, and is some four miles in circumference.

Climate.

The New Hebrides islands are classed as unhealthy. The climate, although very enervating is not worse than that of many other tropical places. The year is divided up, generally speaking, into two seasons, the hot and wet season, commencing in November and ending in April, and the dry and cool season from May to October. Of late, however, the tendency is for the line of demarcation to become less clear, there being considerable periods of drought in the rainy season and vice versa in the dry season. The temperature in the island of Efate ranges from a minimum of about 63° F. in the cool season to a maximum of about 89° F. in the hot. The hot season is the most unhealthy owing to the extreme humidity and the prevalence of mosquitoes. Also it is so enervating as to make recovery from an illness somewhat prolonged. The cool season is, generally speaking, healthy and very pleasant. The southern islands of the Group are cooler and healthier than the northern —the latter being about 7° F. warmer on the average.

History.

The New Hebrides Group was discovered by the Spanish explorer de Quiros in the year 1606. Under the impression that he had at last found the long-sought Southern Continent, the quest for which occupied the navigators of this period, he called it "Tierra Australis del Espiritu Santo." He anchored in a large bay to which he gave the name of St. Philip and St. James, and on the shores of a river flowing into that bay he established the settlement of La Nuova Jerusalem. To the port which undoubtedly existed in those days he gave the name of Vera Cruz. This island is

to-day known as Santo. Owing to sickness, and dissensions with the natives the settlement was soon abandoned and to-day, so far as is known, no traces of it exist. The port of Vera Cruz has likewise disappeared, nor can its original site be traced along the 40 odd miles of coastline forming the bay.

Nothing more was heard of the Group until some 160 years later, when in 1768, the French navigator Bougainville passed to the southward of de Quiros's discovery, and sailed between the islands known to-day as Santo and Malekula, thus disproving de Quiros's claims to the discovery of the great Southern Continent. The strait through which he passed still bears his name. On the same voyage he discovered the islands of Pentecost, Aoba, and Maeovo, to which he gave the name of the Cyclades.

It remained, however, for the great navigator Captain Cook to discover and chart the greater part of the Group in the year 1774, when, entering the Group from the north, he sailed to the southward, discovering and naming the majority of the islands which form the southern chain of the Group. It is recorded that among other places visited he spent some fifteen days in the then snug little harbour of Port Resolution on the island of Tanna. Since those days, however, the floor of the harbour has risen, and where Captain Cook anchored in four fathoms of water, to-day a small launch will scarcely float.

Among other early visitors may be cited Laperouse who is supposed to have visited the Group in 1788; and d'Entrecasteaux, who came in search of Laperouse in 1793.

In the same year the Banks Islands were sighted by Bligh on the occasion of his famous voyage in an open boat to Timor after the mutiny of the *Bounty*.

Dumont d'Urville, Belcher, and Markham, are among the early voyagers whose accounts of these islands are of interest.

By virtue of the Anglo-French Convention of 16th November, 1887, whereby, among other things, each nation agreed not to exercise a separate control over the Group, a Joint Naval Commission was appointed, consisting of the respective Captains and two officers from each of the two warships which then paid periodical visits to the Group. The Commission was charged with the protection of the lives and property of the subjects of the two nations—France and England—in the islands.

By the year 1895 a number of British and French subjects had settled in the Group and the necessity was felt for some jurisdiction to deal with their disputes, in consequence of which an Arbitration Court was established by the colonists, but the Joint Naval Commission pronounced its veto and the Court was dissolved.

In 1902 the Group had assumed sufficient importance to necessitate the appointment of Resident Commissioners to deal with such judicial cases as came within their jurisdiction. In 1902 the first British Resident Commissioner was appointed, the French Government having a short time previously appointed a similar officer.

II.—GOVERNMENT.

By the Convention of 20th October, 1906, between the United Kingdom and France, British-French Condominium Government was established. The Executive consists of a British and French Resident Commissioner acting in concert, assisted by a staff of officers. The Administrative Departments of the Condominium are staffed by officers of both nationalities who are subject to the control of the Resident Commissioners acting jointly. Each Power retains sovereignty over its own nationals. The seat of Government is at Vila on the island of Efate. Condominium Agents of both nationalities are established on various islands of the Group and are allotted areas of control. The executive must in all cases reach joint agreement in decisions affecting the administration of the Condominium. The principal Condominium Judicial body is the Joint Court which is composed of a British and a French Judge with a President of neutral nationality. The joint services include finance, posts and telegraphs, customs, public health, lands registry, and public works.

The Convention of 1906 has been superseded by the Convention of 6th August, 1914, which was ratified in 1922.

The British and French Resident Commissioners are subordinate to their respective British and French High Commissioners. The British High Commissioner is stationed at Suva, and the French High Commissioner at Noumea.

III.—POPULATION.

The population of the New Hebrides is composed of some forty to sixty thousand natives, and 2,993 non-natives. A statement is appended giving details of the non-native population.

Description.	*British.*			*French.*			*Totals.*
	Adult Males.	*Females and Children.*	*Total.*	*Adult Males.*	*Females and Children.*	*Total.*	
Nationals	126	88	214	322	467	789	1,003
Foreigners opted under Protocol.	13	7	20	43	2	45	65
Asiatics opted under Protocol.	35	1	36	34	—	34	70
Protected subjects and citizens—							
Tonkinese ...	—	—	—	1,541	272	1,813	1,813
Javanese ...	—	—	—	*	*	42	42
Totals ...	174	96	270	1,940	741	2,723	2,993

* *Note.*—Total only available.

Of the European population, some 300 French and 70 British reside on the island of Efate, mainly in and around the town of Vila. Santo is the next important centre and carries about 38 British and 150 French. The balance is distributed throughout the Group. The European population of the southern part of the Group is entirely British, amounting to 30 persons; of this number 25 reside on the island of Tanna.

The Chinese and Japanese community number 36 and 34 respectively and are centred in and around the town of Vila.

The primitive state of the New Hebrides precludes the taking of any reliable census of the indigenous population. In certain islands which have been under missionary influence for a number of years, it is possible to make a fairly accurate estimate of the inhabitants, but in the more uncivilized islands such as Malekula, Pentecost, and Santo, whose interiors are almost a closed book, it is not possible to form more than a rough estimate of their numbers.

Malekula is credited with the largest population, some 9,000 natives. Next come Santo and Pentecost, about 7,000 each; Tanna, 6,500; Aoba, 6,000; Ambrym, 4,000; Epi, 2,500; and Efate, 2,000. Among the smaller islands whose population is worthy of note may be cited Paama with just over 2,000, and Tongoa with 1,300 inhabitants.

In general the native population of the Group is on the decline, but in recent years the islands of Tanna, Paama, and Tongoa have shown a slight tendency to an increase. In this connexion it is interesting to note that the natives of these islands appear to be endowed with a keener commercial acumen than their fellows, which, entailing a necessarily increased activity, may have some bearing on their present immunity from decline.

IV.—HEALTH.

The following is a report on the health of the Group by the Chief Condominium Medical Officer :—

> " Parmi les trois dernières années, l'année 1932 a été la plus favorable au point de vue température par suite des pluies qui sont tombées d'une manière assez régulière dans le courant de l'année.
>
> " Il n'y a donc pas eu, comme en 1930 par exemple, de longues périodes de sécheresse et la chaleur a été de ce fait rendue plus supportable.
>
> " L'état général sanitaire des Nouvelles-Hébrides s'est montré satisfaisant durant l'année 1932, grâce à l'usage de plus en plus généralisé de la quinine préventive, grâce aussi aux meilleures conditions d'hygiène et de salubrité.
>
> " Aucune épidémie en 1932—par ci par là, dans les îles de l'archipel d'accés difficile et qui ne se trouvent pas sous un contrôle médical direct se sont produits d'assez nombreuse cas de dysenterie, mais qui n'ont jamais présente l'allure

épidémique. Grâce à une surveillance attentive et grâce à la diligence des autorités locales, ces petits foyers ont pû facilement être enrayés.

"En dehors des tournées régulières pratiqués par les médecins du Condominium et qui donnent des résultats constants une importante tournée ayant pour but la lutte contre l'ankylostomiase et le pian a été entreprise dans l'île de Mallicolo en Septembre et Octobre 1932 par Monsieur le Docteur Burrell du 'Paton Memorial Hospital' aidé du médecin Fidjien Mesulame Taveta et avec l'assentiment des deux Commissaires-Résidents. Cette campagne parait avoir donné d'intéressants résultats qui pourront être contrôlés et complétés au besoin au cours d'une tournée entreprise prochainement.

"D'Octobre à Septembre le Dr. Burrell et Mesulame Taveta ont pratiqués un total de 3,604 injections intraveineuses sur 2,051 indigènes."

Medical Institutions.

There are eight European doctors, four hospitals, and two medical aid posts in the Group. The location of the hospitals and aid posts is as follows :—

Southern Islands.

Tanna.—A well-equipped hospital run by the Presbyterian Mission, assisted by a grant from British funds. A British medical practitioner is in charge of the hospital. A Presbyterian missionary with medical training is also resident on the island, and a French Government Medical Officer.

Central Islands.

Efate.—There are two good hospitals at Vila; the John G. Paton Memorial Hospital, administered by the Presbyterian Mission and assisted by a grant from British funds, and the French Government Hospital. These hospitals have trained European staffs and are in the charge of qualified medical officers.

Epi.—There is a medical aid post on this island, and a European doctor ministers to the medical welfare of the population.

Malekula.—The French Cotton Company have established a hospital at Norsup, and a European medical officer is in charge. At Port Sandwich there is a medical aid post supervised by an Annamite medical practitioner.

Northern Islands.

Santo.—The French Government have established a hospital in the Segond Channel, with a European medical officer in charge.

All these institutions are open to the indigenous population as well as to white residents and Asiatics. The Condominium Government gives free medical treatment to all indigent natives.

The following give statistics of the two hospitals at Vila for 1931 and 1932, and the hospital at Tanna for 1932.

VILA HOSPITALS.

Cases.	*British Hospital.*		*French Hospital.*		*Total.*
	Europeans.	*Natives and Asiatics.*	*Europeans.*	*Natives and Asiatics.*	
In-patients—					
1931	32	263	131	689	1,115
1932	18	282	199	655	1,154
Out-patients—					
1931	58	287	840	7,425	8,610
1932	40	853	3,725	5,840	10,458
Total 1931 ...	90	550	971	8,114	9,725
,, 1932 ...	58	1,135	3,924	6,495	11,612
Deaths 1931 ...	1	11	7	28	47
,, 1932 ...	—	11	9	22	42

TANNA HOSPITAL.

Cases.	*Europeans.*	*Natives and Asiatics.*	*Totals.*
In-patients—			
1932	—	150	150
Out-patients ...	18	2,800	2,818
Total 1932 ...	18	2,950	2,968
Deaths 1932 ...	2	5	7

Diseases.

Malaria is the principal disease. It is more prevalent in the northern islands than the southern, owing to the difference in climate and rainfall. Amoebic dysentery is endemic throughout the year and epidemic in the hot season. Both these diseases are being combated with success by measures of sanitation. Blackwater fever occurs occasionally among Europeans. The indigenous population suffers chiefly from yaws, hookworm, malaria, and dysentery. The various hospitals in the Group, both Government and Missionary, treat the natives for these complaints.

Sanitation.

Sanitation in the islands of the Group is still in the early stages of development but some progress has been made at Vila, the capital, during the past few years. The water-supply is rain-water collected into large tanks with which all houses are equipped. This system has the disadvantage of providing breeding places for

mosquitoes unless adequately protected or periodically treated with kerosene oil. On the other hand, it provides a pure source of supply, and cases of water contamination are rare.

All Government houses in Vila are supplied with septic tanks which prove satisfactory, but most residents adopt the pit system of latrine.

The disposal of refuse is undertaken under Condominium arrangements and disposed of by incineration.

Sanitary legislation provides for the inspection of all meat tendered for human consumption, and for the inspection of private and public premises. A Government quarantine station has been established on the north side of the entrance to Vila Harbour.

V.—HOUSING.

Houses occupied by Europeans in the Group are usually of the one storey bungalow type, of two or more rooms, surrounded by verandas. They are generally constructed of wood and galvanized iron. Owing to the frequency of earthquake shocks, buildings of brick, stone, or concrete, are not favoured.

In the more civilized areas natives are gradually adapting themselves to European ideas of construction, and a marked improvement in native dwelling houses is noticeable in villages adjacent to Vila.

In the outlying islands, mission natives favour dwelling houses constructed of lime mortar, which is a great improvement on the grass humpy of former days, and far more comfortable and sanitary.

The non-mission or heathen native still clings to the insanitary grass or leaf shelter accommodating the whole of his family, and more often than not, his pigs and dogs. But with the gradual advance of civilization, this system is discarded in favour of the more substantial dwellings above mentioned.

The building of houses, etc., in the town of Vila is governed by the provisions of a Town Conservancy Regulation which requires all plans of projected buildings to be passed by a Sanitary Commission.

Periodical inspections of the town are undertaken by the said Sanitary Commission, and a permanent refuse removal squad is responsible for the removal every day of kitchen refuse, etc., and for the cleanliness of the public roads. Under the provisions of the same Regulation, householders are bound to keep their premises in good order, clean, and free of weeds and undergrowth.

VI.—PRODUCTION.

The chief products of the Group in their order of importance are copra, cocoa, coffee, and cotton. Copra is the most important item, the value of the crop for 1932 amounting to £36,306. The value of cocoa produced was £27,967, coffee £6,571, and cotton

£3,277. Local consumption of these products is negligible owing to the lack of demand, the whole crop being exported.

In addition to the main items of produce mentioned above, small quantities of maize and wool are produced and exported; similarly sandalwood, trochas, and snail shell are exported.

A small sheep station running some 2,000 to 2,500 sheep has been in successful operation on the island of Erromanga for some years. Good prices are realized for the wool.

Cattle raising in the Group is not resorted to as an industry. Cattle thrive well and are bred on a small scale generally throughout the Group, principally on account of their food value, and their usefulness in keeping plantations free from grass and undergrowth, thus permitting a considerable economy in plantation hands which would otherwise be required for this purpose.

With the exception of copra, of which about one-sixth is produced by native owners of small plots of coconut trees, the products above mentioned are grown entirely on European-owned plantations, some of them the property of individual owners, others owned by important companies such as the Société Française des Nouvelles-Hébrides, and Société Cottonière, which have large interests in the Group.

Plantations are worked by British settlers with indigenous labourers partly under contract and partly as free and casual labourers. French settlers employ the same class of labour to a large extent, but they are mainly dependent on Tonkinese coolies imported for French settlers by the French authorities.

The proportion of casual or non-contract native labourers as compared with natives employed under contract by British settlers is about 2 to 1, and by French settlers, about 4 to 1.

At the end of 1932 there were 1,813 Tonkinese and 42 Javanese coolies in the Group under contract to French settlers.

The maximum period of contract for indigenous labourers is three years, but with the growing popularity of the casual labour system, these lengthy terms are becoming more and more rare; the native prefers short contracts, or if possible, no contract at all. The usual term of contract for imported Tonkinese coolies is five years.

All native labour is subject to the control of the Administration. Conditions of employment are governed by the labour provisions of the Protocol of 1914. In addition, British settlers are subject to the provisions of separate legislation containing additional restrictions to those provided in the Protocol.

No mining, fishing, or manufacturing industries exist in the Group.

Other than about a score of Tonkinese and Chinese market gardeners in the neighbourhood of the town of Vila, whose produce is all consumed locally, there are no cultivations, plantations, or industries worked or owned by persons of non-European descent.

VII.—COMMERCE.

The New Hebrides soil and climate are excellent for the propagation and growth of all tropical products. So far, planters have specialized in copra, coffee, cocoa, and cotton. The climate is such that all these could be of first-class quality, as, indeed, some are. The lack, however, of up-to-date and scientific methods of preparation, together with the absence of an agricultural department have resulted in some of the New Hebrides products acquiring but a fair reputation in the South Seas.

The general downward trend of prices has caused planters to search for other and more remunerative products, and attention is now being given to the possibilitiese of castor oil, of which a few shipments were made during the year. The market results were disappointing, and some difficulty was experienced in disposing of shipments in Australia owing to lack of demand, but it is thought the European market may be able to offer more favourable conditions.

Other products exported are trochas and burghaus shell, sandalwood, maize, hides, bêche-de-mer, and wool.

There are considerable quantities of cattle in the islands, raised with a view to keeping down vegetation on plantations and to feed labour. Hides are a by-product and not an industry. The quantity of bêche-de-mer produced in the Group is negligible, and merely a by-product of Japanese and Chinese trochas fishers. Pearl shell is occasionally met with but not in sufficient quantities to warrant its collection and export. The quality is said to be good. Wool is grown successfully on one of the southern islands, but sheep do not flourish in the northern part of the Group.

There are many good trees such as kauri, island teak, sandalwood, and many useful hardwoods of different varieties, but, as yet, these have been little exploited owing to lack of markets and to financial difficulties.

Oranges, lemons, limes, grapefruit, bananas, pineapples, mangoes, avocado pears, etc., of good quality grow profusely. An attempt was made to organize the export of bananas, oranges, tomatoes, etc., to New Zealand, but, owing to transport difficulties, the scheme had to be abandoned.

It is said that the New Hebrides are rich in mineral wealth, as yet unexploited. Deposits of coal and sulphur are known to exist and traces of other minerals have been reported.

Large tracts of fertile agricultural land are still untouched awaiting more favourable times and security of tenure.

Exports.

Comparative Table in Tons and Sterling

Produce.	1928.		1929.		1930.		1931.		1932.	
	Tons.	Value.	Tons.	Value.	Tons.	Value.	Tons.	Value.	Tons.	Value.
		£		£		£		£		£
Copra	12,682	208,954	10,787	147,460	11,883	130,573	10,005	69,886	7,032	36,306
Cocoa	1,422	77,685	2,047	89,088	2,265	73,444	1,505	31,435	1,728	27,967
Cotton	551	43,468	329	31,700	480	26,880	387	9,833	189	3,277
Coffee	96	5,534	100	6,530	125	7,892	131	5,712	213	6,571
Trochas and Burghaus shell.	61	2,627	57	2,980	55	2,721	102	2,053	112	1,768
Maize	303	2,277	482	4,355	455	3,670	52	298	99	400
Sandalwood	54	898	49	957	98	1,978	24	492	69	1,146
Wool	22	2,453	8	963	16	1,257	9	412	4	170
Cotton seed	1,198	1,210	657	1,060	476	591	1,063	1,286	411	497
Hides	—	—	—	—	—	—	22	349	17	135
Castor Oil seed	—	—	—	—	—	—	21	121	4	22
Coconuts	—	—	—	—	—	—	61	182	107	289
Bêche-de-mer	—	—	—	—	—	—	9	104	1	13
Miscellaneous	336	975	643	1,139	607	1,514	276	30	28	40
Totals	16,725	£346,081	15,159	£286,232	16,460	£250,520	13,667	£122,193	10,014	£78,601

COMPARATIVE TABLE OF PRICES OF RAW PRODUCE.

(Expressed in Pounds Sterling Gold per metric ton.)

	1930.	*1931.*	*1932.*
	£	£	£
Copra	11	7	5
Coffee	45	35	30
Cocoa	32	21	16
Cotton	56	25	17
Maize	8	5·7	4
Trochas	52	24	20
Burghaus	12	10	8
Wool	79	47	42

Export statistics continue to show a decline in production and values as a result of the world depression of prices of primary products. The year 1932 is the worst experienced for some years. Compared with the previous year production has declined 27 per cent. and values nearly 36 per cent., while compared with the figures for 1928, almost the peak year in Condominium history, the decrease is 40 per cent. and 77 per cent. respectively.

The apathy of the native population of the Group towards the production of copra, consequent on the low prices prevailing, was somewhat less marked, particularly on the island of Tanna, where the output during the latter part of the year approached the pre-depression period.

Planters generally have been obliged to confine their activities to the harvesting of such of their standing crops as could be worked at a profit; labour forces were necessarily reduced to a minimum and little or no development work has been possible. The cultivation of cotton has been practically abandoned owing to low prices. For the same reason cocoa production has declined, and in some instances small plantations have been abandoned. A little maize was grown, chiefly for local consumption. Coffee continues to receive attention, and a slight increase in production and export has resulted. This is chiefly due to the bounty given to French settlers by the French Government on this product.

The share of produce exported by British firms and planters was 45 per cent. and 27 per cent. for tonnage and value respectively.

Imports.

Comparative Table of Import Values.

Year.	*British currency.*	*French currency.*	*Remarks.*
	£	*Francs.*	*Converted at*
1924	92,201	7,929,327	francs 86=£
1925	217,863	22,004,232	francs 101=£
1926	197,840	30,457,405	francs 154=£
1927	307,939	38,184,562	francs 124=£
1928	374,797	46,474,828	francs 124=£
1929	300,035	37,204,343	francs 124=£
1930	157,541	19,535,138	francs 124=£
1931	79,997	9,919,635	francs 124=£
1932	81,587	10,116,807	francs 124=£

Comparative Table of Chief Imports.

	Value.		
	1930.	*1931.*	*1932.*
	£	£	£
Beer	968	1,150	1,574
Benzine (petrol)	7,761	3,238	3,288
Biscuits	1,234	780	385
Tinned goods and groceries	8,362	2,720	1,603
Cartridges	1,170	280	240
Tobacco	5,363	5,545	4,466
Cement	1,685	780	599
Lubricating oils	1,952	1,285	273
Spirits	1,706	1,635	2,569
Tinned milk	1,476	1,050	879
Kerosene	3,600	2,520	2,340
Rice	22,661	11,254	7,325
Flour	6,137	2,815	2,164
Sugar	2,420	1,610	1,570
Soap	1,141	843	613
Tinned fish	1,883	1,180	462
Wines (fine)	1,980	1,010	1,424
Wines (ordinaire)	4,346	4,096	2,493
Gunny bags	2,830	4,857	3,688
Building materials	6,612	3,561	3,953
Agricultural machinery, boats, motor cars ...	2,210	674	793
Potatoes	1,000	456	347
Tea		1,240	789

Imports for the year show a slight increase over those for 1931 the values being £81,587 and £79,997 respectively, a rise of slightly under 2 per cent. The principal items showing an increased import are beers, spirits, and fine wines. Tinned goods, tobacco, lubricating oils, rice, flour, ordinary wines, and gunny bags, show a decrease in import. The economic situation of the Group, owing to the world depression of produce prices, continues to be reflected in import statistics; compared with the flourishing period of five years ago, a falling off in imports of 76 per cent. has occurred.

This is mainly due to the settlers' inability to pay for more than the necessities of life, and to the large decrease in the number of Tonkinese coolies now employed in the Group. The British share of the imports was slightly over 50 per cent. of the total for the year.

It must be admitted, however, that one cause of the drop in import values has been the reduction in the price of many imported articles, due to exchange rates and other economic causes. These causes have assisted importations from Australia, and to some extent from the United Kingdom, at the expense of the trade with France and America. Most of the importations of both French and British are, indeed, now from Australia, the chief articles being flour, beer, fine cigarettes, tinned meats and fish, potatoes, butter, tinned milk, ship's biscuit, haberdashery, clothing, etc. Some of these articles formerly came almost exclusively from France.

The principal importing firms are (British) Messrs. Burns, Philp (South Sea) Company, Limited, (French) Les Comptoirs Françaises des Nouvelles-Hébrides, la Compagnie Franco-Hébridaise, and Messrs. Gubbay Frères. Importations by these and other companies have been substantially decreased for financial reasons, and most firms have been compelled to reduce their staffs.

There are three steamers employed in the inter-island trade. Two of these (one British, one French) carry trade-rooms where the settler is able to purchase most of his requirements, and is enabled to dispose of his produce on the spot. The third vessel (French) confines its operations to the freighting of cargo and carriage of passengers. In addition there are a number of small cutters and launches engaged in trading operations mainly with natives.

There are three large stores in Vila, one of which is British; in addition there are numerous small shops in the hands of Japanese and Chinese traders. There are two stores at the Segond Channel, Santo, both French.

VIII.—WAGES AND COST OF LIVING.

Labour and Wages.

Native Labour.

Native labour may be divided into three main classes:—

(*a*) plantation labour, boats' crews of local small vessels, employees of traders, Government messengers, Constabulary, etc., on contract and otherwise;

(*b*) domestic labour;

(*c*) casual labour, working on steamers, wharves, Government works, etc.

The supply of native labour during the year was equal to the demand, and settlers equipped with recruiting vessels found no difficulty in filling their requirements. Less fortunate settlers

were mainly dependent on local or casual labourers, whose services are spasmodic and unreliable, and usually command a higher rate of pay than labourers under contract.

In consequence of the temporary cessation of the importation of Tonkinese coolies, French settlers have been forced to revert to the employment of indigenous labour.

The native's aversion to long term engagements is as pronounced as ever; he prefers to work without engagement if possible and will not usually bind himself for more than twelve months.

By nature the native of the New Hebrides is lazy and of mercurial temperament. He will not work unless circumstances compel him. His wants are less simple than formerly as he has become accustomed to European food and clothing. When times are good labour is exceedingly scarce and dear, as the majority of natives can obtain all they want by the sale of the produce of their lands, and with a minimum of exertion. When times are bad, like the present, the point arrives when the native, having exhausted his hoarded savings, cannot, without a very great deal of exertion himself, obtain the luxuries he desires. He is then faced with the choice of work on his own account, which is unpalatable, or, on the other hand, with either reverting to his natural state in the matter of food (of which there is plenty) and clothing, or working for wages. This stage was reached during the course of 1931. The result has been that while employers have found no difficulty in obtaining labour, the production of native-made copra has fallen off to a very considerable extent generally. As native savings also began to be exhausted, traders have found it difficult to obtain a living, there being no money to buy their wares.

Domestic labour remains by comparison difficult to secure, as the native, neither male nor female, takes kindly to this form of service and can rarely be prevailed upon to stay with an employer for an extended period. For this reason the New Hebridean servant is not efficient, and can rarely be trained to the finer domestic arts.

Wages of most classes of native labour have undergone some reduction, but not in ratio to the depression of prices. During the year the current rates of wages were:—

Class (*a*)—

Plantation labourers ... Boats' crews ... ... Traders' employees ...	£1 to £2 per month with food and clothing, whether under engagement or not.
Government messengers ...	£3 per month without food.
Constabulary	From £2 per month with food and clothing.

Note.—Local or casual labour is frequently employed on plantations for picking cotton and seasonal crops on a daily wage of from 1s. to 2s. with or without food, according to arrangement.

Class (*b*)—

Domestic labour	{	£1 to £2 per month with food and clothing, whether engaged or not.

Class (*c*)—

Casual labour, other than plantation	{	3s. to 5s. per day with or without food, and according to skill.

The employment of natives under engagement of any kind is governed by the provisions of the Protocol of 1914, and in the case of British dependants also by national legislation.

Asiatic Labour.

Asiatic labour consists of—

(*a*) Indo-Chinese coolies imported under contract for the use of French settlers by the French Government. These Tonkinese are, generally speaking, satisfactory, being of a superior intelligence to the native, if not so physically strong, and are naturally hard workers. They receive approximately 120 francs per month per head, plus food, clothing, lodging, etc. The cost to the settler is now considerably higher than that of native labour as, in addition to wages, he is charged for the cost of transportation to and from Indo-China, Government inspection, and medical surveillance, etc. Owing to the depression a large number have been repatriated, there remaining at the end of the year some 1,800 against 3,000 at the end of 1931. There are also a very few Javanese and Chinese under contract.

(*b*) Free Chinese and Japanese labour of the artisan class. These are only a handful and work on daily wages which are unfixed and depend partly on skill and partly on demand. Such wages vary from 4s. to 15s. *per diem*. There are also a few Chinese employed as stewards, cooks, and firemen, on inter-island steamers at rates varying from £3 to £6 per month with rations.

Cost of Living.

The maintenance of a good standard of living among European residents is an important factor for the preservation of health and an equitable mental outlook, and it is desirable that it should be as high as circumstances permit. The general standard of European living is good. At Vila, the capital of the Group, living is more expensive than in other parts, as facilities for maintaining vegetable gardens and livestock are less. Market gardening is carried out by the Chinese community and by a few natives, and under normal conditions green vegetables can be obtained during seven to eight months of the year. The supply is generally unreliable being at times in excess of local requirements and at other times the reverse. Fresh meat of fair quality is obtainable from the local butchers, and arrangements for supplies of fresh milk

can usually be made. Fish is difficult to obtain, and the quality is tropical. The stores maintain supplies of clothing, hosiery, boots, etc., but it is more desirable for wearing apparel to be obtained from Australia or Europe. Nearly all perishable food commodities are imported from Australia with the exception of rice and sugar, of which a proportion is imported from Indo-China and Java.

The cost of living in the islands of the Group away from Vila is cheaper and generally more satisfactory. All European residents are able to maintain vegetable gardens and livestock and thus provide themselves with eggs, milk, butter, poultry and meat. The periodical visits of the island vessel supply them with such other commodities as they require.

The following table gives the average retail prices in the town of Vila during 1932 :—

Fresh milk	8d. to 10d. per quart.
Flour	2½d. to 3d. per lb.
Rice	1½d. to 2d. per lb.
Sugar	2½d. per lb.
Potatoes	2½d. to 3d. per lb.
Fresh meat	8d. to 1s. 4d. per lb.
Onions	3d. per lb.
Butter	1s. 9d. to 2s. per lb.
Tea	2s. 6d. to 3s. per lb.
Coffee (local)	6d. per lb.
Eggs	2s. 6d. to 4s. per dozen.
Poultry	4s. to 7s. each.
Tinned meat	1s. to 2s. per lb.
Wood fuel	5s. to 10s. per cubic metre.
Kerosene	9s. 9d. per tin (4 gallons).
Petrol	9s. 6d. to 10s. 6d. per tin (4 gallons).

IX.—EDUCATION AND WELFARE INSTITUTIONS.

There are no schools controlled or supported by the Condominium Government, nor are there any facilities for European children to receive anything but a primary education, which is not of a very high standard.

The town of Vila has three schools : (1) a school for girls, supported and controlled by the Sisters of the Sacred Heart Mission ; (2) a boys' school, supported and controlled by the Marist Mission ; and (3) an infants' school run by the French Government. Admission to these schools is not restricted to the children of Europeans and the entrance fees are purely nominal.

The British and French Missions in the Group have various good schools and training institutions for the benefit of the natives. The Presbyterian Mission maintains an excellent school at Tangoa,

South Santo, and can accommodate up to sixty pupils. They also maintain other schools throughout the Group. The Melanesian Mission have a good school at Lolowai, Aoba, and schools in the Banks Group. The Seventh Day Adventist Mission have a utilitarian school at Aore Island, Santo, which is equipped with modern machinery for teaching all kinds of woodcraft. The Marist Mission also maintains schools in various islands of the Group.

All these institutions carry out excellent work among the natives and deserve commendation.

The task of educating the New Hebridean has been left in the hands of the various mission bodies operating in the Group; but in order to appreciate the inestimable services rendered by these missions in educating and civilizing the wild inhabitants of these islands, a short sketch of missionary endeavour will be of assistance.

The island of Erromanga was the scene of the first essay to wean the native from heathenism, when in the year 1839 John Williams and Harris, under the auspices of the London Missionary Society, landed at Dillons Bay, and in the same year were killed by the natives in whose welfare they strove.

It was not until 1857 that any further attempt was made to bring civilization to the Erromangans. In that year the Reverend G. N. and Mrs. Gordon took up the work, but were subsequently murdered by the natives, to be followed by Gordon's brother, who perished in the same manner. The Gordons were followed by Mr. and Mrs. McNair. Mr. McNair died on the island and was followed by the Reverend Doctor Robertson, who, after many years of danger and hardship had the satisfaction of seeing the whole island under the civilizing influence of Christianity when he left the Group in 1920.

Erromanga is well named " The Martyr's Isle ".

In 1842 an endeavour was made by Messrs. Turner and Nisbet to convert the Tannese, but their efforts were not attended with success, and after a few months they were forced to flee, barely escaping with their lives. Sixteen years later the Reverend Doctor J. G. Paton took up the work on Tanna but, owing to the hostility of the natives, was compelled to abandon the island after four years. He settled on the adjacent island of Aniwa, where his efforts were attended with every success. Tanna was afterwards occupied by the Reverends Watt and Neilson, whose work materially contributed to the subjugation of the warlike Tannese.

About the year 1850 the control of the missions passed into the charge of the various Presbyterian Church Bodies in the Colonies, and in later years the more northern islands of the Group were endowed with missionaries. The following names figure prominently in the list of those devoted men and women who in the early days braved the hardships and dangers of this Group in the task of claiming its inhabitants for civilization: the Reverend Milne of Nguna; Doctors Mackenzie and Macdonald of Efate;

Michelsen of Tongoa; Smail and Fraser of Epi; Morton and Watt-Leggatt of Malekula; Annand and Mackenzie of Santo.

Other workers in the New Hebrides mission-field include the Catholic, Melanesian, Church of Christ, and Seventh Day Adventist denominations.

The Catholic Mission was first established on the island of Aneityum in the year 1848, but their stay was not of long duration, and the attempt was soon abandoned. They returned to the Group however in 1887, and since that date their influence has gradually extended to the whole Group with the exception of the southern islands, and the Banks and Torres.

The Melanesian Mission was in the field about the year 1850, and by agreement with the Presbyterian Missions the northern part of the Group, comprising Aoba, Pentecost, Maeovo, and the Banks and Torres, as yet untouched by the Presbyterians, was abandoned as a Melanesian Mission sphere of influence.

It was on Aoba Island in the year 1905 that the Reverend Godden of this Mission, the latest of mission martyrs at native hands, was brutally murdered by a native of that island.

In 1912 the Seventh Day Adventists started operations on Efate, but later transferred their activities to Ambrym, Malekula, and Santo.

In the task of civilizing the native the importance of education was never lost sight of. Each mission village had its school, where the rudiments of reading and writing were imparted to young and old. To-day there are four good central schools, in addition to the mission station schools, where facilities are provided for primary education of the native. Of these the Training Institution established many years ago by the Presbyterian Mission at Tongoa renders excellent services in fashioning from the raw material teachers in whose care is confided the task of education. Another invaluable institution of this nature is the Melanesian Mission school on Aoba. The Catholic Mission school at Vila also renders good services in this direction. The year 1925 saw the Seventh Day Adventists installed on the island of Aore, where natives from all parts of the Group, in addition to their scholastic studies, receive practical instruction in various arts and crafts.

Apart from the good educational work achieved by the missions, there is the equally important and beneficial medical work undertaken by the Presbyterian Mission, about which much could be written. A few years ago this denomination maintained no less than four well-equipped hospitals in the Group. To-day there are two, one at Tanna and the other at Vila. These hospitals are primarily intended for native patients, but their services are no less appreciated by white sufferers. The hospital established at Dip Point, Ambrym, under the superintendence of Doctor Bowie, to whose skill and kindness, not only hundreds of natives but many

Europeans alive to-day owe their lives, will always be remembered in connexion with missionary endeavour in this Group. This hospital, in the year 1913, was engulfed, together with the adjoining mission station and native villages, in the tremendous volcanic outburst on that island, and to-day, where the hospital stood, is nothing but a shallow lake.

The Mission hospital at Vila was opened in 1912, and is a well appointed building standing on the small island of Iririki in Vila Harbour.

Tanna hospital has been in existence over 25 years and its beneficial services are well known and appreciated by all.

X.—COMMUNICATIONS AND TRANSPORT.

Shipping.

Europe.—A two-monthly service of the Messageries Maritimes line is maintained between the terminal points of Dunkirk and Noumea (New Caledonia), via Vila, on both inward and outward voyages. The route is via Tahiti, Panama, Martinique, and Marseilles, and the period of the voyage approximately 65 days between Vila and Marseilles. The following vessels are engaged in this service :—*Ville de Verdun*, *Boussole*, *Astrolabe*, *Ville de Strasbourg*, *Recherche*, and *Esperence*.

Australia.—The S.S. *Morinda* (Burns Philp line) and the S.S. *Laperouse* (Messageries Maritimes) maintain five-weekly communications with Sydney, New South Wales—the former via Norfolk Island and Lord Howe Island on the outward and homeward voyages from Sydney, and the latter via Lifou, Loyalty Islands, and Noumea, New Caledonia.

Dutch Line.—A regular service is also maintained by the Royal Packet Navigation Company's steamer *Van Rees* between Saigon and Noumea, touching at Vila about every two and a-half months, via New Guinea, Papua, and Batavia.

New Caledonia.—Communication is maintained with Noumea by the S.S. *Laperouse* every four to five weeks, and by the Messageries line of steamers previously mentioned, approximately every two months. The French inter-island steamer also pays fairly frequent visits to Noumea.

Inter-Island.—The following steamers make monthly or five-weekly voyages round the Group. They have no fixed itinerary, but usually connect at Vila with the British or French mail vessels :—

S.S. *Makambo* (Burns, Philp (South Sea) Company), S.S. *Bucephale* (Messageries Maritimes) and S.S. *Pervenche* (privately owned).

The port of Vila is the port of entry in the Group. The tonnage entered and cleared during 1932 was as follows:—

ENTERED.

	Tons.	
British	19,673	(15 vessels).
French	94,375	(35 vessels).
Other	13,080	(8 vessels).
	127,128	

CLEARED.

	Tons.	
British	19,025	(14 vessels).
French	91,515	(34 vessels).
Other	13,080	(8 vessels).
	123,620	

Ports.

Vessels of any size can enter the Port of Vila but the number of anchorages for large vessels is limited. All loading and discharging is carried out in lighters as the wharves and jetties at Vila are not suitable for vessels exceeding 100 tons.

Railways.

There are no railways in the Group. A two-foot trolley rail track runs from the outskirts of Mélé to Vila—a distance of about four miles—and is used for various commercial purposes. The small wharves, privately-owned by the commercial houses in Vila, are also provided with rails for the transport on trolleys of merchandize to and from the bulk store sheds.

Posts.

Mail communication from and to Europe and Australia is maintained by the mail steamers S.S. *Morinda* and S.S. *Laperouse*, which call at Vila and various island ports every five weeks. These lines are subsidized by His Majesty's Government in the Commonwealth of Australia and the French Government, respectively. The mails, both inward and outward, are sorted at Vila and rebagged for distribution round the Group by the inter-island steamers, which receive a grant from the Condominium Government for the services performed. The average time for European postal matter to reach Vila by the regular mail routes is 42 to 49 days. The Condominium Government has a postage stamp issue designed to represent the dual control. There are two sets of stamps—one British and one French. Both are inscribed in English and French currency.

The postal matter handled by the Vila Post Office for 1932 was as follows :—

	From or to British territory.		*From or to French territory.*		*From or to other places.*		*Total.*
	Received.	*Despatched.*	*Received.*	*Despatched.*	*Received.*	*Despatched.*	
Letters	23,000	19,000	52,000	36,000	3,000	2,000	135,000
Other articles ...	44,000	2,000	30,000	4,000	500	500	81,000
Registered articles ...	300	900	3,400	3,600	100	200	8,500
Totals ...	67,300	21,900	85,400	43,600	3,600	2,700	224,500

Radio-Telegraph.

Communication with the New Hebrides is by radio-telegraph. The Condominium Government maintains a station at Vila. The Station is powered at 1½ kilowatts and the call sign is F J X. Reception and transmission is carried out on wave lengths of 17 to 40 metres and 21 to 37 metres respectively and also on the 600 and 800 metre bands. A daily service is maintained with the station at Suva, Fiji, (V P D and V R P) and with the French Government station at Noumea, New Caledonia (F J P). Severe static interferes with the service on the intermediate bands during the hot and rainy season from November to April. The terminal charge of the Vila Station is 3d. or 1 franc 50 centimes per word (minimum charge 1s. 6d.). The rate per word for telegrams despatched from Vila to Australia and the United Kingdom is as follows :—

To	*Ordinary.*	*Deferred.*	*D.L.T.*
Australia	1s. or 6·20 frs.	—	—
United Kingdom ...	2s. 5d. or 14·93 frs.	1s. 2d. or 7·47 frs.	10d. or 4·98 frs. (Minimum charge of 25 words.)

The traffic handled by the Station during the year under report was as follows :—

Class.	*Words received.*	*Words despatched.*
Official	53,977	58,203
Private	11,586	12,501
Relayed	6,401	—
L.C.O.	938	765
Relayed L.C.O.	505	—
D.L.T.	323	20
X.L.T.	51	98
Total... ...	73,781	71,587

Total words received and despatched = 145,368.

Roads.

With the exception of the islands of Efate, Tanna, and Tongoa, there are very few public highways in the Group suitable for wheeled transport. Tanna has several good roads, one of which traverses the island. There is also a fair road on the island of Tongoa. Vila, the capital and seat of Government, has several good roads and these link up with the outlying districts.

Telephones.

Telephone communication is established in the town of Vila and the outlying districts. The system is operated by a central exchange and the service is continuous. There are 60 telephones and 86 miles of wire. During the hurricane season the service is liable to interruption. There are no telephone systems in the other islands of the Group. The annual subscription rate is £4 (unlimited calls).

XI.—BANKING, CURRENCY, AND WEIGHTS AND MEASURES.

There are no banks in the New Hebrides. The Condominium Government carries out its banking operations through Noumea (New Caledonia) and Sydney (Australia). It has been the practice in the past for the larger British and French commercial houses to act as bankers for their clients, but depressed conditions have severely restricted these operations. The Banque de l'Indochine, at Noumea, issues a local note which circulates in the New Hebrides and is guaranteed by the Bank of France.

The currencies circulating in the New Hebrides Group are sterling, Australian and French currency. Owing to the variation in the rates of exchange of sterling and Australian currency, the position of the three currencies is complicated. The situation is aggravated by the lack of local banking facilities.

The Condominium Government adopts the rate of 124 francs to the pound sterling. Sterling therefore remains at gold parity with the franc for Government purposes, while Australian currency remains at the prevailing discount rate against sterling.

Australian currency is used by British residents throughout the Group, while sterling is confined mostly to Government transactions. The average local commercial rates of exchange during the year for sterling and Australian money in relation to the franc were: pound sterling = 90 francs and pound Australian = 80 francs. The British and French systems of weights and measures are both employed throughout the Group.

XII.—PUBLIC WORKS.

The Condominium maintains a Public Works Department normally controlled by a Superintendent and an Assistant. No works of outstanding importance were undertaken during the year, operations being confined mainly to essential repairs to buildings, and the upkeep of the more important roads.

In normal times building material is mostly imported from Australia. Dwelling houses and other buildings are all made of wood and galvanized iron owing to the prevalence of earth tremors.

The construction and maintenance of roads and bridges is carried out partly by the Public Works Department and partly by local contract under Public Works supervision. Semi-metalled roads exist in Efate for a few miles round Vila. There are unmetalled or semi-metalled roads in various parts of the Group, the best being those in the islands of Tanna and Tongoa, which have been made by the natives themselves to facilitate the cartage of produce to the beaches. Such roads are comparatively easy of construction as the underlying hard coral is generally close to the surface and thus cartage of material is minimized. The chief difficulty in maintaining roads is the keeping down of bush.

The use of motor vehicles, and in some islands ox-wagons, has increased the importance of road construction. Most plantations now keep motor transport for their own use and maintain very fair motor ways within their own boundaries. These frequently link up with similar roads on adjoining properties. In this manner most of the existing public roads (now maintained by the Condominium) have come into being and it is probable that public roads and island arteries of the future will be similarly evolved.

The Public Works Department also maintains the harbour light system of Vila Harbour. This consists of an automatic lighthouse on Pango Point, which guides vessels to the mouth of Vila Harbour, and a pair of leading lights on the hills above the harbour which give a line to the deep water entrance. A green light shows the lateral margin of safety for large ships.

XIII.—JUSTICE, POLICE, AND PRISONS.

Justice.

The Convention of 1914 provided for the immediate introduction of three Courts, namely the Joint Court, and the French and British National Courts, and the subsequent formation of two others—Courts of First Instance and Native Courts.

The scope and functions of these Courts is briefly as follows :—

(1) *Joint Court.*—The Court is composed of a British and a French Judge, with a President of neutral nationality. There is also a Public Prosecutor and a Native Advocate. The Joint Court

is a Court of final adjudication in matters of purely Condominium nature. Broadly speaking, and subject to certain exceptions, its civil jurisdiction is confined to certain proceedings in respect of rights over immovable property—its chief function being that of a land Court governing the registration of indefeasible titles to land. It may also settle cases between any parties, native or non-native, brought before it by consent of both. Its criminal jurisdiction, broadly speaking, is confined to offences—(*a*) connected with the recruitment of native labourers, or (*b*) committed by natives against non-natives, or (*c*) committed by natives against natives in areas where the Native Code is in force and involving a penalty of over one year's confinement, or (*d*) against the Convention, or Joint Regulations passed in pursuance thereof, in areas where no Court of First Instance exists.

There is an appeal to the Joint Court from all judgments of Courts of First Instance and from important civil judgments of Native Courts. The Joint Court also has certain revisionary powers in criminal cases of Native Courts, and judgments of Courts of First Instance involving sentence of imprisonment.

(2) *Courts of First Instance.*—The composition of these Courts consists of a British and a French District Agent with a British or French Assessor chosen by lot. Their jurisdiction is over breaches of the 1914 Convention, or of Joint Regulations made thereunder, except those connected with the recruitment of native labour.

(3) *Native Courts.*—These are composed of either a British or French District Agent, assisted by two native Assessors. The British and French Agents preside over the Courts in turn, month and month about. A necessary corollary to the full and complete functioning of these Courts is the promulgation in the area of the Native Code.

(4) and (5) *National Courts.*—The British and French Governments have established in the Group, in conformity with their existing legal systems, Courts with jurisdiction over all civil cases, other than those reserved to the Joint Court, and over all criminal cases in which a non-native is the defendant. In civil cases the jurisdiction over actions between non-natives belongs in some cases to the Court of the Power under whose law the contract was concluded, or the act or thing in question originated, and in other cases to the Court of the Power to which the defendant belongs. In criminal cases, non-natives are justiciable by the Court of their own nationality or the nationality applied to them.

Courts of First Instance have so far been set up in Central Districts Nos. 1 and 2.

A Code of Native Criminal Law has been instituted, and two Native Courts—one in the Central District No. 1 and one in the Southern District—have been formed to administer Penal Law only within their competence and jurisdiction.

Police.

The policing of the Group is carried out by two separate forces of armed native constabulary, British and French, each in the charge of a National Commandant under the orders of the respective Resident Commissioners. The headquarters are at Vila, and small detachments are located at the District Agencies on the islands of Tanna, Malekula, and Santo, respectively, in order to assist the District Agents in the carrying out of their duties.

The British force is composed of natives recruited from the islands of the New Hebrides, and the French force partly of New Hebrideans and Loyalty Islanders. In addition, the French have enrolled a number of Tonkinese police, for the purpose of facilitating police operations among the Tonkinese coolies in the Group.

The duties of the native constabulary consist in the maintenance of law and order among the native population of the more civilised areas, general police and patrol work, the guarding of native prisoners, and the repression of native disorders.

Both the British and French Commandants, in addition to their duties as police officers of the Condominium, also act as police officers in so far as their own nationals are concerned, and are charged with the conduct of police cases before their respective National Courts.

The cost of the maintenance of the two forces is defrayed by the respective national Governments, except when the two corps are acting jointly, when the expenses are met from Condominium funds.

The usual term of enlistment for natives of the Group is two years. Some re-engage for further terms. The civilising influence of the period spent under discipline combined with the regular food and regular hours of work, is an important factor in the lives of these natives. When they return to their homes they have acquired a certain knowledge of, and respect for, the law and white man's justice which cannot fail to be of assistance to them and their fellow islanders in their everyday life and their relations with Europeans.

Prisons.

Each Government maintains its own national prison, which is situated in the town of Vila, and accommodation is provided for both natives and whites. The cost of maintenance of prisoners sentenced by the national tribunals is met from national funds, and that of natives sentenced by the Resident Commissioners and the Native and Mixed Courts, from Condominium funds.

There is no Condominium prison staff. Each Commandant acts as prison keeper and is responsible for the supervision of prisoners placed in his charge. He is assisted by police constables who act as warders.

In addition to the national prisons at headquarters each District Agency is provided with a temporary lock-up in which natives under short sentences are confined.

The class of native prisoner with which the Administration is called upon to deal is almost exclusively confined to those sentenced for breaches of local liquor laws and offenders against the provisions of the Native Penal Code.

Native prisoners are employed in works of general utility, such as the making and cleaning of roads, weeding Government paddocks, transport of material to various Government buildings, etc.

The daily average of native prisoners confined in the British prison was 2·9 and in the French prison 7·4. No deaths occurred in the British prison. Generally speaking, the health of prisoners was good.

The following judgments, other than civil, were recorded by the various Courts :—

	Nature of Judgment.	
	Fine.	*Imprisonment.*
Joint Court	*2	2
Courts of First Instance	17	1
Native Courts	10	37
Resident Commissioners' Court ...	12	45
British National Court	—	4
Totals	41	89

* One appeal from Court of First Instance, Central District No. 1.

XIV.—LEGISLATION.

The following Joint Regulations were brought into force during the year :—

No. 1 ... "*To modify temporarily and provisionally Joint Regulation No. 3 of 1930 which provides for the Registration of Instruments affecting land in the New Hebrides.*"—This Regulation was enacted to limit the powers of the two Officers acting jointly as Registrar of Land Titles during the absence of the substantive holder of the post.

No. 2 ... "*To increase the Rates of Duty to be paid on certain articles Imported into the New Hebrides.*"—This Regulation repealed No. 2 of 1927 which fixed the rates of duty payable on articles imported into the Group but it was subsequently repealed and No. 2 of 1927 continues in force.

There exists no factory legislation, nor legislative provision for compensation for accidents, sickness, old age, etc., in the New

Hebrides, except as far as is provided in the Protocol of 1914 and King's Regulation No. 1 of 1913, which govern the care of native labour. There are no factories or industries except agriculture in the New Hebrides.

XV.—PUBLIC FINANCE AND TAXATION.

By Article 5 of the Convention of 1914 each of the two Powers is required to defray the expenses of its own Administration in the Group. The cost of the joint services is defrayed out of local taxation. The joint services include finance, posts and telegraphs, customs, public works, ports and harbours, public health, the Joint Court and the Summary Courts and lands registry. In the event of revenue from local taxation proving insufficient to meet jointly approved expenditure, the two Signatory Powers contribute the deficit in equal proportions. Since the year 1921 the Condominium has been self-supporting, but owing to the falling off in revenue, due to the general commercial depression, contributions were required in the years 1931 and 1932 from each Government.

Revenue and Expenditure.

CONDOMINIUM REVENUE.

Year.	*French Currency.* *Francs.*	*British Currency.* £	*Remarks.* *Converted at*
1927	3,037,711 or	24,497	francs 124 = £
1928	3,463,551 or	27,932	francs 124 = £
1929	3,549,562 or	28,624	francs 124 = £
1930	2,402,829 or	19,378	francs 124 = £
1931	1,592,941 or	12,846	francs 124 = £
1932	1,242,635 or	10,021	francs 124 = £

CONDOMINIUM EXPENDITURE.

Year.	*French Currency.* *Francs.*	*British Currency.* £	*Remarks.* *Converted at*
1927	2,220,479 or	17,907	francs 124 = £
1928	3,568,404 or	28,777	francs 124 = £
1929	3,210,639 or	25,892	francs 124 = £
1930	3,509,011 or	28,298	francs 124 = £
1931	3,013,698 or	24,304	francs 124 = £
1932	2,455,448 or	19,802	francs 124 = £

The chief sources of Condominium revenue are import and export taxes, and port dues, which normally account for some four-fifths of the receipts. Other sources of income are postal and telegraphic receipts, Court fees and fines, survey fees, trading licences, taxes on vehicles, lands registry fees, and miscellaneous receipts.

The following is a brief table of the principal import duties:—

General merchandize, unspecified ...	6	per cent. *ad valorem*.
Gramophones, records, perfumery, lace, rifles, revolvers, and cartridges.	20	,, ,,
Spirits and tobacco	12	,, ,,
Wines and petrol, lubricating and combustible oils.	5	,, ,,
Kerosene	3	,, ,,
Shotguns and cartridges, detonators	100	,, ,,
Beer	6d.	per gallon.
Dynamite	9d.	per lb.
Fuse	2d.	per 24 feet.

No duty is levied on the following articles:—livestock, books, cereals and seeds, ship's biscuit, fertilizers, medical appliances and drugs for hospitals, microscopes, plants, vaccines and lymphs, fresh vegetables and fruit.

The main heads of taxation and actual yields for the year 1932, are tabulated as follows:—

	£
Inland Revenue (trading and other licences) ...	596
Post Office	412
Port dues	671
Court and survey fees	233
Import duties	6,242
Export duties	835
Wireless Telegraph (gross)	982
Lands registry	36

EXPENDITURE ON SERVICES ENTIRELY BRITISH.

	£
1927-28	16,048
1928-29	11,966
1929-30	9,506
1930-31	10,314
1931-32	9,540

This expenditure is defrayed from funds provided by Parliament on Civil Estimates, Vote for Colonial and Middle Eastern Services, Class II, 9. Certain miscellaneous receipts, such as Court fees and

fines and rent, totalling about a hundred pounds annually, are applied in reduction of the Vote on which expenditure is provided for. The expenditure on British services includes, among other things, the personal emoluments of the British national staff, Police Force, and District Agents, and maintenance of houses of officers and police barracks.

The French Government maintains at national expense services similar to the above.

XVI.—MISCELLANEOUS.

Lands and Survey.

Land owned by settlers in the New Hebrides was acquired originally from native owners, either by purchase or barter. Ownership at the present day is based on these native deeds, but such deeds do not constitute a valid title until judgment has been pronounced upon them by the Joint Court. The procedure in regard to obtaining indefeasible titles to land in the New Hebrides is set out in Articles 22 to 27 of the Protocol of 1914. Approximately 1,000 claims have been lodged in the Joint Court representing an area of 2,150,000 acres, more or less.

The registration of Efate and adjacent islands was completed during the year, all applications for title, etc., having been finally adjudicated.

Survey of claims on the island of Tanna was taken in hand and will be continued during 1933.

The speed with which titles are granted is dependent to a large extent on the progress of land surveys of the properties affected, and of the claims of opposing applicants for title.

A staff of surveyors is attached to the Court, but owing to the difficult nature of the country to be surveyed and identified, progress is necessarily slow. For financial reasons the staff of surveyors has recently been reduced.

In the grant of land titles, due consideration is given to the needs of the indigenous population that may be occupying lands coming up for registration. The Court instructs its surveyors to report on such matters in the course of their work, and is guided by such reports in deciding the desirability or necessity of making native reserves. An official Native Advocate is appointed by the two Governments to watch over native interests in land matters and to bring to the notice of the Court instances of usurpation of land by settlers, as well as to assist them in opposing claims actually before the Court. The Torrens system of land registration has been adopted in the New Hebrides.

Atmospheric Disturbances.

A hurricane of considerable intensity visited the central islands of the Group during February, 1932. No extensive damage occurred on the island of Efate, but Emai, Tongoa, Epi, Paama, and Ambrym suffered heavily, and the Administration found it necessary to adopt food relief measures in those areas.

General.

The year 1932 was one of continued depression for the primary producer, the trader, and the merchant. Prices remained at an uneconomic value, and consequently there was no stimulant to production by European or native.

The unsatisfactory financial situation of the Condominium Government, owing to depletion of revenue consequent on the depression, made it necessary to practise the severest economy in all departments of administration, and projected expenditure was reduced by a substantial sum.

His Excellency Monsieur Jore, High Commissioner for France in the New Hebrides and Governor of New Caledonia, visited Vila in the S.S. *Laperouse* and spent seven days in a tour of the islands.

During a severe gale in April the British inter-island vessel S.S. *Malinoa* (Burns Philp line) was stranded off the island of Aoba. She was refloated subsequently and proceeded under her own steam to Vila, but owing to extensive damage to her hull she was condemned.

On 31st October, the new Melanesian Mission vessel *Southern Cross* was wrecked at Aneityum Island and became a total loss. This was her maiden voyage to the New Hebrides.

His Honour Count de Buena Esperanza, President of the Joint Court, proceeded on leave of absence to Spain on completion of the registration of land on the island of Efate.

The Christmas message of His Majesty the King to the British Commonwealth of Nations, broadcast from the Empire transmitter at Daventry and relayed from Australasian stations was heard with intense pleasure and pride by several of His Majesty's subjects in the Group.

APPENDIX

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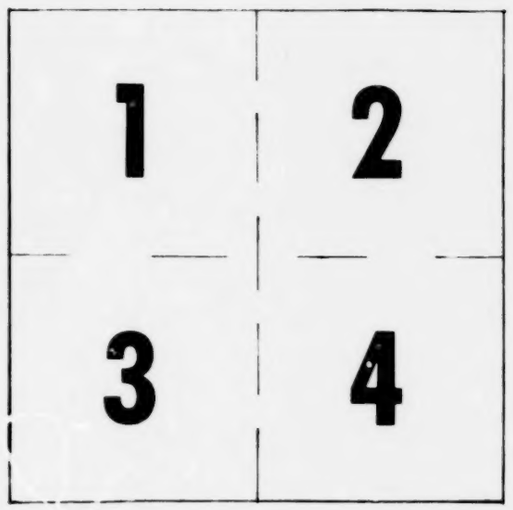
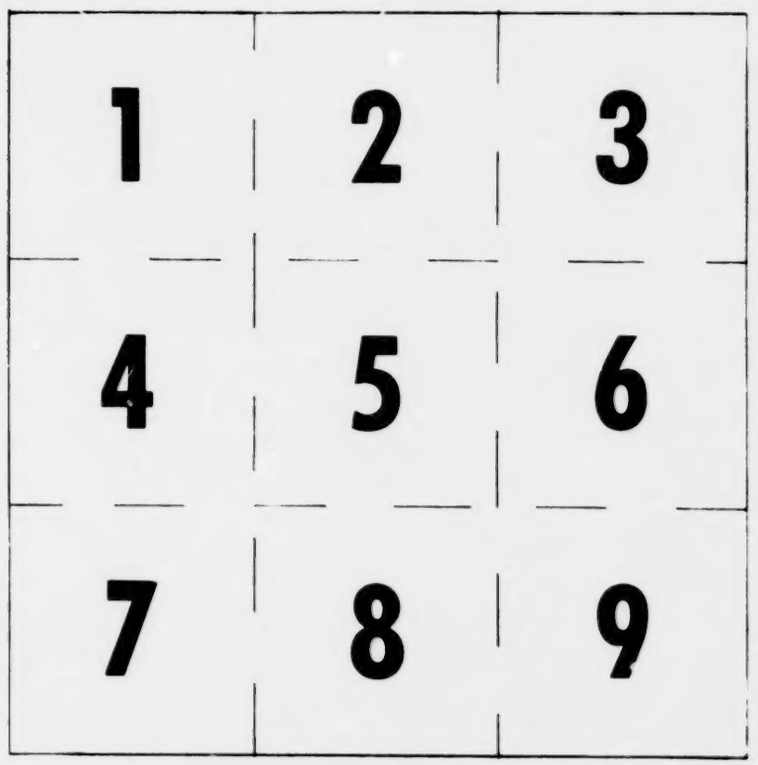
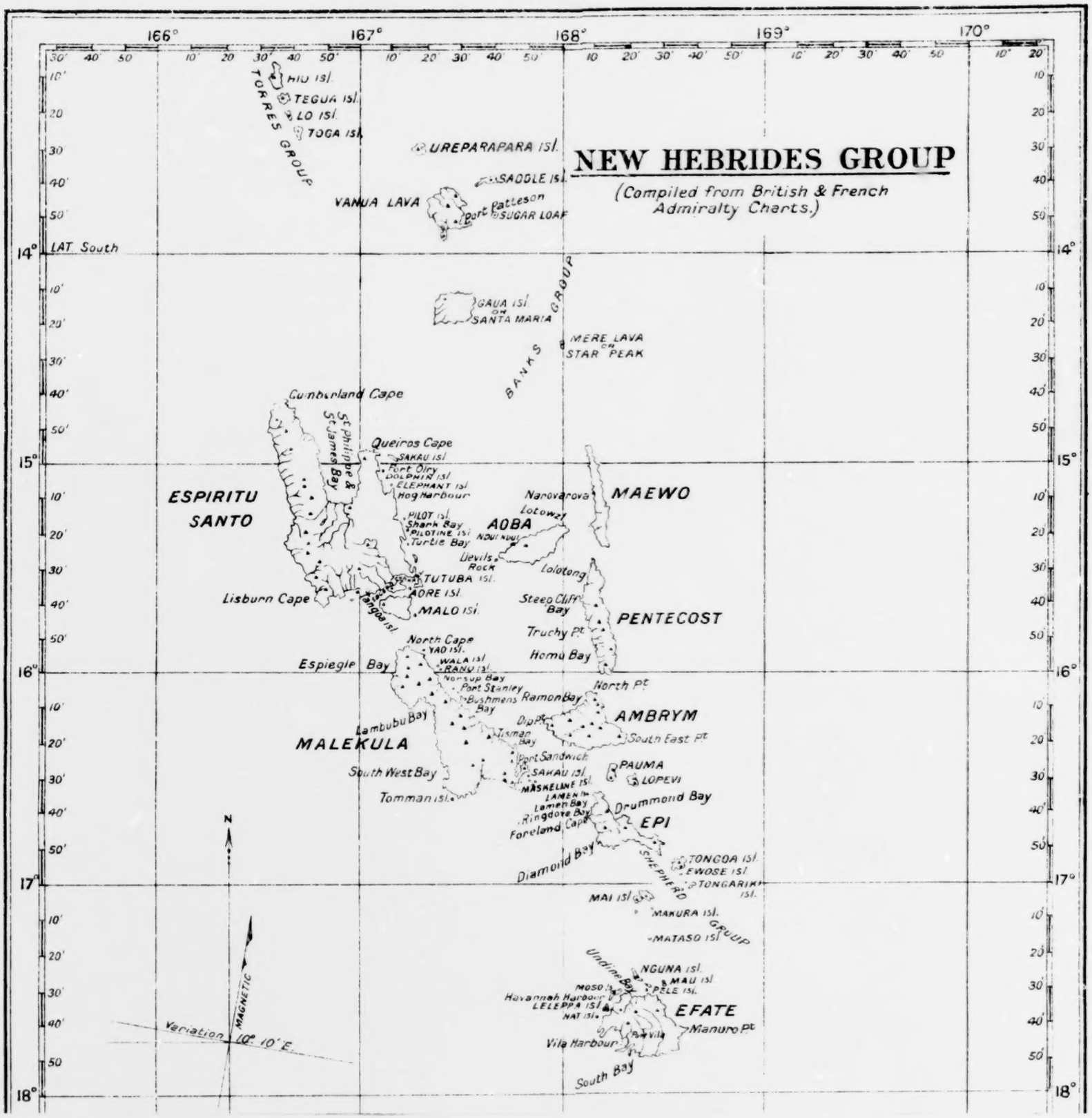
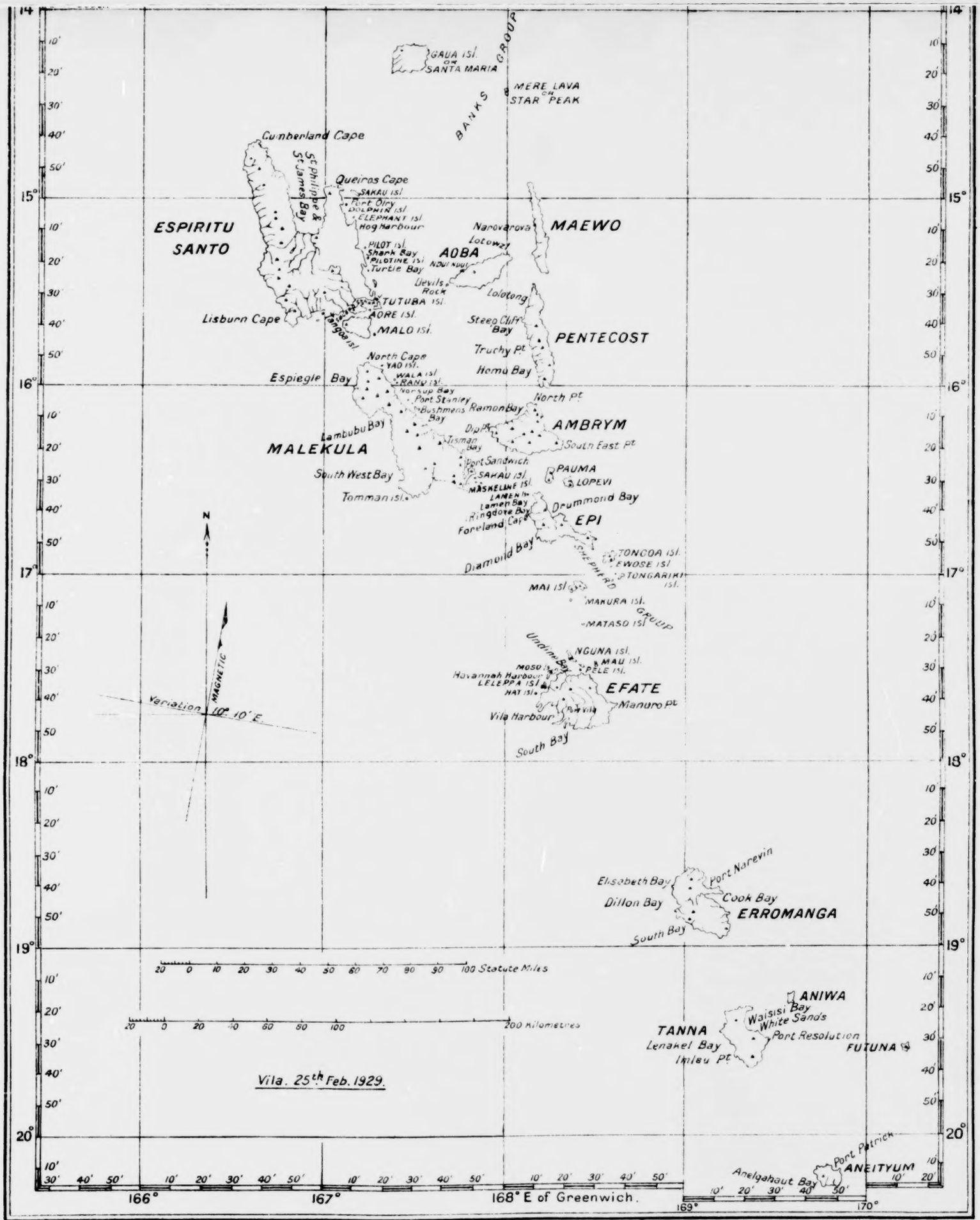





NEW HEBRIDES GROUP
(Compiled from British & French Admiralty Charts.)
166°
167°
168°
169°
170°
14° LAT. South
15°
16°
17°
18°
TORRES GROUP
HIU ISL.
TEGUA ISL.
LO ISL.
TOGA ISL.
UREPARAPARA ISL.
SADDLE ISL.
VANUA LAVA
Port Patteson
SUGAR LOAF
BANKS GROUP
GAUA ISL. OR SANTA MARIA
MERE LAVA OR STAR PEAK
Cumberland Cape
St. Philippe & St. Jacques Bay
Queiros Cape
SAKAU ISL.
Port Olry
DOLPHIN ISL.
ELEPHANT ISL.
Hog Harbour
ESPIRITU SANTO
PILOT ISL.
Shark Bay
PILOTINE ISL.
Turtle Bay
Devils Rock
TUTUBA ISL.
AORE ISL.
Lisburn Cape
Tangoa ISL.
MALO ISL.
Espiegle Bay
North Cape
YAO ISL.
WALA ISL.
RANU ISL.
Norsup Bay
Port Stanley
Bushmens Bay
Ramon Bay
Lambubu Bay
MALEKULA
South West Bay
Tomman ISL.
AOBA
NOUMBOUL
Narovarova
Lotowai
MAEWO
Lolotong
Steep Cliff Bay
PENTECOST
Truchy Pt.
Homu Bay
North Pt.
Dip Pt.
Tisman Bay
AMBRYM
South East Pt.
Port Sandwich
SAKAU ISL.
MASKELINE ISL.
LAMEN Hr.
Lamen Bay
Ringdove Bay
Foreland Cape
PAUMA
LOPEVI
Drummond Bay
EPI
Diamond Bay
SHEPHERD GROUP
TONGOA ISL.
EWOSE ISL.
TONGARIKI ISL.
MAI ISL.
MAKURA ISL.
MATASO ISL.
Undine Bay
NGUNA ISL.
MAU ISL.
PELE ISL.
MOSO ISL.
Havannah Harbour
LELEPPA ISL.
NAT ISL.
EFATE
Manuro Pt.
Vila Harbour
Vila
South Bay
N
MAGNETIC
Variation 10° 10' E.



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ANNUAL REPORT ON THE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC PROGRESS OF THE PEOPLE OF THE NEW HEBRIDES, 1933

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I.—GEOGRAPHY, CLIMATE, AND HISTORY.

Geography.

The New Hebrides lie between the 13th and 21st degrees of South latitude, and the 166th and 170th degrees of East longitude, and are of an area of roughly 5,700 square miles.

The Group includes those of the Banks and Torres, the former lying a few miles due north of the main Group, and the latter about 40 miles to the north-west of the Banks, the whole forming an irregular double chain some 440 miles in length.

The largest island of the Group is Santo, of an area of approximately 1,500 square miles, and a coastline of about 200 miles. The southern and western sides are very mountainous and rugged, some of the ranges rising to a height of over 6,000 feet. The next largest island is Malekula which, although very much broken up by mountain ranges, is not so mountainous as Santo.

Other larger islands in their order of importance are Efate, Ambrym, Erromanga, Epi, Aoba, Pentecost, and Maeovo, and Gaua and Vanua Lava of the Banks Group. In addition to these are some 80 small islands and islets.

There are three active volcanoes in the Group situated on the islands of Tanna, Ambrym, and Lopevi, respectively. The first two are in a constant state of eruption, and the last named somewhat quiescent, emitting smoke and vapour at irregular intervals

The Group possesses four good harbours, Vila and Havannah Harbours situated on the island of Efate, and Ports Sandwich and Stanley on Malekula, besides a number of good sheltered anchorages such as the Segond Channel and Pallicollo on Santo, Ringdove Bay on Epi, The Maskelynes off South Malekula, Undine Bay on Efate, and Anelgahaut on Aneityum.

The Headquarters of the Administration are situated on the shores of Vila Harbour, which is also the chief commercial centre of the Group. Other important settlements are located at Epi, Malekula, and the Segond Channel, Santo.

The Group is generally well watered. On the larger islands are several small rivers navigable to boats and small motor craft for a distance of some miles. The only lake of any size in the Group is found on top of the island of Gaua in the Banks Group, and is some four miles in circumference.

Climate.

The New Hebrides islands are classed as unhealthy. The climate, although very enervating is not worse than that of many other tropical places. The year is divided up, generally speaking, into two seasons, the hot and wet season, commencing in November and ending in April, and the dry and cool season from May to October. Of late, however, the tendency is for the line of demarcation to become less clear, there being considerable periods of drought in the rainy season and vice versa in the dry season. The temperature in the island of Efate ranges from a minimum of about 63° F. in the cool season to a maximum of about 89° F. in the hot. The hot season is the most unhealthy owing to the extreme humidity and the prevalence of mosquitoes. Also it is so enervating as to make recovery from an illness somewhat prolonged. The cool season is, generally speaking, healthy and very pleasant. The southern islands of the Group are cooler and healthier than the northern—the latter being about 7° F. warmer on the average.

History.

The New Hebrides Group was discovered by the Spanish explorer de Quiros in the year 1606. Under the impression that he had at last found the long-sought Southern Continent, the quest for which occupied the navigators of this period, he called it "Tierra Australis del Espiritu Santo." He anchored in a large bay to which he gave the name of St. Philip and St. James, and on the shores of a river flowing into that bay he established the settlement of La Nuova Jerusalem. To the port which undoubtedly existed in those days he gave the name of Vera Cruz. This island is

to-day known as Santo. Owing to sickness, and dissensions with the natives, the settlement was soon abandoned and to-day, so far as is known, no traces of it exist. The port of Vera Cruz has likewise disappeared, nor can its original site be traced along the 40 odd miles of coastline forming the bay.

Nothing more was heard of the Group until some 160 years later, when in 1768, the French navigator Bougainville passed to the southward of de Quiros's discovery, and sailed between the islands known to-day as Santo and Malekula, thus disproving de Quiros's claims to the discovery of the great Southern Continent. The strait through which he passed still bears his name. On the same voyage he discovered the islands of Pentecost, Aoba, and Maeovo, to which he gave the name of the Cyclades.

It remained, however, for the great navigator Captain Cook to discover and chart the greater part of the Group in the year 1774, when, entering the Group from the north, he sailed to the southward, discovering and naming the majority of the islands which form the southern chain of the Group. It is recorded that among other places visited he spent some fifteen days in the then snug little harbour of Port Resolution on the island of Tanna. Since those days, however, the floor of the harbour has risen, and where Captain Cook anchored in four fathoms of water, to-day a small launch will scarcely float.

Among other early visitors may be cited Laperouse who is supposed to have visited the Group in 1788; and d'Entrecasteaux, who came in search of Laperouse in 1793.

In the same year the Banks Islands were sighted by Bligh on the occasion of his famous voyage in an open boat to Timor after the mutiny of the *Bounty*.

Dumont d'Urville, Belcher, and Markham, are among the early voyagers whose accounts of these islands are of interest.

By virtue of the Anglo-French Convention of 16th November, 1887, whereby, among other things, each nation agreed not to exercise a separate control over the Group, a Joint Naval Commission was appointed, consisting of the respective Captains and two officers from each of the two warships which then paid periodical visits to the Group. The Commission was charged with the protection of the lives and property of the subjects of the two nations—France and England—in the islands.

By the year 1895 a number of British and French subjects had settled in the Group and the necessity was felt for some jurisdiction to deal with their disputes, in consequence of which an Arbitration Court was established by the colonists, but the Joint Naval Commission pronounced its veto and the Court was dissolved.

In 1902 the Group had assumed sufficient importance to necessitate the appointment of Resident Commissioners to deal with such judicial cases as came within their jurisdiction. In 1902 the first British Resident Commissioner was appointed, the French Government having a short time previously appointed a similar officer.

II.—GOVERNMENT.

By the Convention of 20th October, 1906, between the United Kingdom and France, British-French Condominium Government was established. The Executive consists of a British and French Resident Commissioner acting in concert, assisted by a staff of officers. The Administrative Departments of the Condominium are staffed by officers of both nationalities who are subject to the control of the Resident Commissioners acting jointly. Each Power retains sovereignty over its own nationals. The seat of Government is at Vila on the island of Efate. Condominium Agents of both nationalities are established on various islands of the Group and are allotted areas of control. The executive must in all cases reach joint agreement in decisions affecting the administration of the Condominium. The principal Condominium Judicial body is the Joint Court which is composed of a British and a French Judge with a President of neutral nationality. The joint services include finance, posts and telegraphs, customs, public health, lands registry, and public works.

The Convention of 1906 has been superseded by the Convention of 6th August, 1914, which was ratified in 1922.

The British and French Resident Commissioners are subordinate to their respective British and French High Commissioners. The British High Commissioner is stationed at Suva, and the French High Commissioner at Noumea.

III.—POPULATION.

The population of the New Hebrides is composed of some forty to sixty thousand natives, and 2,318 non-natives. A statement is appended giving details of the non-native population.

Description.	*British.*			*French.*			*Totals*
	Adult Males.	*Females and Children.*	*Total.*	*Adult Males.*	*Females and Children.*	*Total.*	
Nationals	112	68	180	322	467	789	969
Foreigners opted under Protocol.	12	6	18	32	—	32	50
Asiatics opted under Protocol.	40	2	42	29	—	29	71
Protected subjects and citizens—							
Tonkinese ...	—	—	—	847	319	1,166	1,166
Javanese ...	—	—	—	26	36	62	62
Totals ...	164	76	240	1,256	822	2,078	2,318

Of the European population, some 300 French and 60 British reside on the island of Efate mainly in and around the town of Vila. Santo is the next important centre and carries about 38 British and 150 French. The balance is distributed throughout the Group. The European population of the southern part of the Group is entirely British amounting to 30 persons; of this number 25 reside on the island of Tanna.

The Chinese and Japanese community number 42 and 29 respectively and are centred in and around the town of Vila.

The primitive state of the New Hebrides precludes the taking of any reliable census of the indigenous population. In certain islands which have been under missionary influence for a number of years it is possible to make a fairly accurate estimate of the inhabitants, but in the more uncivilized islands such as Malekula, Pentecost, and Santo, whose interiors are almost a closed book, it is not possible to form more than a rough estimate of their numbers.

Malekula is credited with the largest population, some 9,000 natives. Next come Santo and Pentecost, about 7,000 each; Tanna, 6,500; Aoba, 6,000; Ambrym, 4,000; Epi, 2,500; and Efate, 2,000. Among the smaller islands whose population is worthy of note may be cited Paama with just over 2,000, and Tongoa with 1,300 inhabitants.

In general the native population of the Group is on the decline, but in recent years the islands of Tanna, Paama, and Tongoa have shown a slight tendency to an increase. In this connexion it is interesting to note that the natives of these islands appear to be endowed with a keener commercial acumen than their fellows, which, entailing a necessarily increased activity, may have some bearing on their present immunity from decline.

IV.—HEALTH.

The following is a report on the health of the Group by the Chief Condominium Medical Officer:—

> " L'année 1933 a été marquée par une épidémie de grippe qui a affecté toute la population de l'Archipel sans exception, Européens, Indigènes, et Asiatiques et qui principalement parmi l'élément indigène a provoqué un assez grand nombre de décès.
>
> " Les premiers cas ont fait leur apparition en mai, 1933, ils étaient bénins et sans gravité. Alors que l'épidémie paraissait terminée, brusquement elle subit une recrudescence et prit aussitôt une allure assez grave s'accompagnant fréquemment de complications pulmonaires.
>
> " Cette épidémie a affecté habituellement la forme pulmonaire, cependant elle a, dans quelques coins de l'Archipel pris la forme méningée, ce qui en d'autres temps et sans

la concordance de l'épidémie de grippe, aurait pu faire croire à des cas de méningite cérébro-spinale.

" En dehors de cette épidémie qui a fâcheusement influencé la morbidité en 1933, l'état sanitaire s'est maintenu excellent par ailleurs. On note en particulier une régression assez nette du Paludisme et de la dysenterie.

" Les affections le plus habituellement observées chez l'indigène sont les mêmes que celles signalées dans les précédents rapports, à savoir par ordre décroissant de fréquence :

" *Le pian* excessivement répandu—on peut dire que tout indigène a été à un moment donné de son existence, atteint de cette affection.

" *Les ulcères* phagédéniques de dimensions parfois énormes.

" *Le tokelau*, affection cutanée principalement répandue dans les îles du Sud.

" *La dysenterie*, surtout la bacillaire, affectant parfois l'allure épidémique et qui a été assez rare en 1933.

" *La tuberculose pulmonaire*, plus fréquente dans les parties de l'Archipel où les conditions d'hygiène et de bien être sont défavorables.

" *Le paludisme*, qui paraît en régression.

" *L'ankylostomiase*, principalement répandue dans le groupe des îles du nord, particulièrement à Mallikolo.

" *Les maladies vénériennes*, rares et à peu près uniquement l'apanage des indigènes qui sont allés travailler à l'extérieur.

" *La lèpre*, dont il existe quelques cas dans les différent îles. Un modeste centre d'isolement et de traitment des lépreux a été créé à Tanna par les soins du Médecin Capitaine Garcin et il est à souhaiter que de pareils centres soient rapidement installés dans les principales îles de l'Archipel—(Vaté, Mallikolo, Santo).

" La population des îles ne semble pas avoir subi un accroissement sensible en 1933—si l'on excepte quelques rares points privilégiés. Elle serait plutôt en décroissance par rapport à l'année précédente en raison des décès survenus à l'occasion de l'épidémie de grippe signalée ci-dessus.

" Les épidémies qui sévissent périodiquement aux Nouvelles-Hébrides et parmi lesquelles il faut citer en premier lieu la dysenterie, constituent à mon avis, aved la mortalité infantile, une des principales cause de dépeuplement. Cette dernière est très élevée aux Nouvelles-Hébrides. Elle paraît due surtout à un mauvais sevrage des nourrissons, sevrage trop précoce et trop rapide. L'enfant est immédiatement bourré de taros, ignames et cocos. C'est vers le 10ème ou 15ème mois que la mortalité est le plus élevée.

" Au cours de l'année 1933 un certain nombre de tournées ont été faites par les médecins du Condominium. A Mallikolo

le médecin Fidjien, Mesulame Taveta, sous la direction du Docteur Laporte a pratiqué environ 800 injections intraveineuses de Novarsénobenzol et administré à peu près le même nombre de doses de Tétrachlorure de carbone contre l'ankylostomiase. Le développement de l'Assistance Médicale du Condominium aux Nouvelles-Hébrides est des plus modestes. Cela tient pour une grande partie aux difficultés de pénétration et à l'absence à peu près complète de moyens de transport et de communication. Cela tient également à la modicité des moyens mis en oeuvre par l'Administration du Condominium en cette période de crise Budgétaire. Une oeuvre d'assistance en général ne saurait être complète et donner des résultats intéressants que si des sacrifices importants sont consentis.

" Aux Hébrides oú l'Indigène est particuliérement primitif et où il a eu peut-être dans les débuts quelque raison de se méfier de la civilisation des blancs qui lui était offerte parfois en peu brutalement, il faut pour l'attirer et le retenir, qu'on l'admette sans exception et en lui accordant le maximum de facilité, au bénéfice de l'Assistance Médicale. En retour, et en atténuation des sacrifices consentis, peut-être pourrait-on exiger de lui des prestations en nature. Ce n'est qu'à ce prix que l'Assistance Médicale du Condominium pourra se développer et être vraiement digne des deux grands pays qui la représentent."

Medical Institutions.

There are eight European doctors, four hospitals, and two medical aid posts in the Group. The location of the hospitals and aid posts is as follows :—

Southern Islands.

Tanna.—A well-equipped hospital run by the Presbyterian Mission, assisted by a grant from British funds. A British medical practitioner is in charge of the hospital. A Presbyterian missionary with medical training is also resident on the island, and a French Government Medical Officer.

Central Islands.

Efate.—There are two good hospitals at Vila; the John G. Paton Memorial Hospital, administered by the Presbyterian Mission and assisted by a grant from British funds, and the French Government Hospital. These hospitals have trained European staffs and are in the charge of qualified medical officers.

Epi.—There is a medical aid post on this island, and a European doctor ministers to the medical welfare of the population.

Malekula.—The French Cotton Company have established a hospital at Norsup, and a European medical officer is in charge. At Port Sandwich there is a medical aid post supervised by an Annamite medical practitioner.

Northern Islands.

Santo.—The French Government have established a hospital in the Segond Channel, with a European medical officer in charge.

All these institutions are open to the indigenous population as well as to white residents and Asiatics. The Condominium Government gives free medical treatment to all indigent natives.

The following give statistics of the New Hebrides hospitals for the year 1933 :—

Vila Hospitals.

Cases.	*British Hospital Vila.*		*French Hospitals (amalgamated.)*		*Total.*
	European.	*Natives and Asiatics.*	*European.*	*Natives and Asiatics.*	
In-patients ...	16	350	255	1,267	1,888
Out-patients ...	14	604	4,501	10,299	15,418
Total ...	30	954	4,756	11,566	17,306
Deaths ...	—	8	13	64	85

Diseases.

Malaria is the principal disease. It is more prevalent in the northern islands than the southern, owing to the difference in climate and rainfall and the prevalence of large swampy areas. Amoebic dysentery is endemic throughout the year and epidemic in the hot season. Both these diseases are being combated with success by measures of sanitation. Blackwater fever occurs occasionally among Europeans. The indigenous population suffers chiefly from yaws, hookworm, malaria, and dysentery. The various hospitals in the Group, both Government and Missionary, treat the natives for these complaints.

Sanitation.

Sanitation in the islands of the Group is still in the early stages of development but some progress has been made at Vila, the capital, during the past few years. The water-supply is rain-water collected into large tanks with which all houses are equipped. This system has the disadvantage of providing breeding places for mosquitoes unless adequately protected or periodically treated with

kerosene oil. On the other hand, it provides a pure source of supply, and cases of water contamination are rare.

All Government houses in Vila are supplied with septic tanks which prove satisfactory, but most residents adopt the pit system of latrine.

The disposal of refuse is undertaken under Condominium arrangements and disposed of by incineration.

Sanitary legislation provides for the inspection of all meat tendered for human consumption, and for the inspection of private and public premises. A Government quarantine station has been established on the north side of the entrance to Vila Harbour.

Periodical inspections of the town are undertaken by the Sanitary Commission, and a permanent refuse removal squad is responsible for the removal every day of kitchen refuse, etc., and for the cleanliness of the public roads.

V.—HOUSING.

Houses occupied by Europeans in the Group are usually of the one storey bungalow type, of two or more rooms, surrounded by verandas. They are generally constructed of wood and galvanized iron. Owing to the frequency of earthquake shocks, buildings of brick, stone, or concrete, are not favoured.

In the more civilized areas natives are gradually adapting themselves to European ideas of construction, and a marked improvement in native dwelling houses is noticeable in villages adjacent to Vila.

In the outlying islands, mission natives favour dwelling houses constructed of lime mortar, which is a great improvement on the grass humpy of former days, and far more comfortable and sanitary.

The non-mission or heathen native still clings to the insanitary grass or leaf shelter accommodating the whole of his family, and more often than not his pigs and dogs. But with the gradual advance of civilization this system is discarded in favour of the more substantial dwellings above mentioned.

The building of houses, etc., in the town of Vila is governed by the provisions of a Town Conservancy Regulation which requires all plans of projected buildings to be passed by a Sanitary Commission.

Under the provisions of the same Regulation, householders are bound to keep their premises in good order, clean, and free of weeds and undergrowth.

VI.—PRODUCTION.

The chief products of the Group in their order of importance are copra, cocoa, coffee, and cotton. Copra is the most important

item, although the value of the crop for 1933 amounted to only £23,864. The value of cocoa produced was £28,745, coffee £13,937, and cotton £1,084. Local consumption of these products is negligible owing to the lack of demand, the whole crop being exported.

In addition to the main items of produce mentioned above, small quantities of maize and wool are produced and exported; similarly sandalwood, trochas and snail shell are exported.

A small sheep station running some 2,000 to 2,500 sheep has been in successful operation on the island of Erromanga for some years. Good prices are realized for the wool.

Cattle raising in the Group is not resorted to as an industry. Cattle thrive well and are bred on a small scale generally throughout the Group, principally on account of their food value, and their usefulness in keeping plantations free from grass and undergrowth, thus permitting a considerable economy in plantation hands which would otherwise be required for this purpose.

With the exception of copra, of which about one-sixth is produced by native owners of small plots of coconut trees, the products above mentioned are grown entirely on European-owned plantations, some of them the property of individual owners, others owned by important companies such as the Société Française des Nouvelles-Hébrides, and Société Cottonière, which have large interests in the Group.

Plantations are worked by British settlers with indigenous labourers partly under contract and partly as free and casual labourers. French settlers employ the same class of labour to a large extent, but they are mainly dependent on Tonkinese coolies imported for French settlers by the French authorities.

The proportion of casual or non-contract native labourers as compared with natives employed under contract by British settlers is about 2 to 1, and by French settlers, about 4 to 1.

At the end of 1933 there were 1,166 Tonkinese and 26 Javanese coolies in the Group under contract to French settlers.

The maximum period of contract for indigenous labourers is three years, but with the growing popularity of the casual labour system, these lengthy terms are becoming more and more rare; the native prefers short contracts, or if possible, no contract at all. The usual term of contract for imported Tonkinese coolies is five years.

All native labour is subject to the control of the Administration. Conditions of employment are governed by the labour provisions of the Protocol of 1914. In addition, British settlers are subject

to the provisions of separate legislation containing additional restrictions to those provided in the Protocol.

No mining, fishing, or manufacturing industries exist in the Group.

Other than about a score of Tonkinese and Chinese market gardeners in the neighbourhood of the town of Vila, whose produce is all consumed locally, there are no cultivations, plantations, or industries worked or owned by persons of non-European descent.

VII.—COMMERCE.

The New Hebrides soil and climate are excellent for the culture of all tropical products. Planters have so far specialized in copra, cocoa, coffee and cotton. Unfortunately owing to the lack of scientific methods of preparation and of a system of standardization, these products are very irregular in quality and owing to their indifferent reputation receive a comparatively low price.

With the exception of that of copra, the downward trend of prices seems to have been arrested during the year. Coffee in particular improved towards the end of the year. Certain planters have continued their efforts with castor oil, but were discouraged by the ravages of caterpillars and other pests.

Other products exported were trochas and burghaus shell, sandalwood, maize, hides, bêche-de-mer, and wool.

There are considerable quantities of cattle in the islands, raised with a view to keeping down weeds and grass on plantations and to feed labour. Hides are a by-product and not an industry. The quantity of bêche-de-mer produced is small and merely a by-product of Japanese and Chinese trochas fishers. Pearl shell is occasionally found, but only in small quantities. Wool is grown successfully on one of the southern islands but sheep do not flourish in the northern part of the Group.

There are many good trees such as kauri, island teak, sandalwood, as well as a variety of hardwoods, but as yet these have been little exploited owing to economic and topographical difficulties.

Oranges, lemons, limes, grapefruit, bananas, pineapples, mangoes and avocada pears, etc., grow in profusion, but none are exported owing to markets being closed.

It is believed that the New Hebrides are rich in mineral wealth. Exploitation has been delayed owing to land tenure difficulties. Coal and sulphur are known to exist.

Large tracts of fertile land are still untouched, awaiting more favourable times and security of tenure.

Exports.

Comparative Table in Tons and Sterling

Produce.	1928.		1929.		1930.		1931.		1932.		1933.	
	Tons.	Value.	Tons.	Value.	Tons.	Value.	Tons.	Value.	Tons.	Value.	Tons.	Value.
		£		£		£		£		£		£
Copra	12,682	208,954	10,787	147,460	11,883	130,573	10,005	69,886	7,032	36,306	7,045	23,864
Cocoa	1,422	77,685	2,047	89,088	2,265	73,444	1,505	31,435	1,728	27,967	1,893	28,745
Cotton	551	43,468	329	31,700	480	26,880	387	9,833	189	3,277	62	1,084
Coffee	96	5,534	100	6,530	125	7,892	131	5,712	213	6,571	433	13,937
Trochas and Burghaus shell.	61	2,627	57	2,980	55	2,721	102	2,053	112	1,768	110	1,782
Maize	303	2,277	482	4,355	455	3,670	52	298	99	400	35	143
Sandalwood ...	54	898	49	957	98	1,978	24	492	69	1,146	61	941
Wool	22	2,453	8	963	16	1,257	9	412	4	170	9	436
Cotton seed ...	1,198	1,210	657	1,060	476	591	1,063	1,286	411	497	128	121
Hides	—	—	—	—	—	—	22	349	17	135	21	172
Castor Oil seed ...	—	—	—	—	—	—	21	121	4	22	52	172
Coconuts	—	—	—	—	—	—	61	182	107	289	79	185
Bêche-de-mer ...	—	—	—	—	—	—	9	104	1	13	18	236
Miscellaneous ...	336	975	643	1,139	607	1,514	276	30	28	40	97	21
Totals ...	16,725	£346,081	15,159	£286,232	16,460	£250,520	13,667	£122,193	10,014	£78,601	10,043	£71,839

COMPARATIVE TABLE OF PRICES OF RAW PRODUCE.

(*Expressed in Pounds Sterling Gold per metric ton.*)

	1930.	*1931.*	*1932.*	*1933.*
	£	£	£	£
Copra	11	7	5	3·4
Coffee	45	35	30	32
Cocoa	32	21	16	15
Cotton	56	25	17	18
Maize	8	5·7	4	4
Trochas	52	24	20	20
Burghaus	12	10	8	6
Wool	79	47	42	47

The sum total of exports by weight is practically the same as in 1932. The decrease in cotton has been balanced by the increase in coffee. Copra remains at the same low level, there having been small incentive to the native to produce more at ruling prices.

Planters generally have confined themselves to reducing costs to the lowest possible limit in the hope that prices will once again show a reasonable margin of profit, but to those dependent solely on copra the outlook has become acute. The cultivation of cotton continues to decline and cocoa has been maintained at about the level of 1932. The most satisfactory product is coffee.

The share of produce exported by British firms and planters was 26 per cent. and 14 per cent. for tonnage and value respectively.

Imports.

COMPARATIVE TABLE OF IMPORT VALUES.

Year.	*British currency.*	*French currency.*	*Remarks.*
	£	*Francs.*	*Converted at*
1924	92,201	7,929,327	francs 86=£
1925	217,863	22,004,232	francs 101=£
1926	197,840	30,457,405	francs 154=£
1927	307,939	38,184,562	francs 124=£
1928	374,797	46,474,828	francs 124=£
1929	300,035	37,204,343	francs 124=£
1930	157,541	19,535,138	francs 124=£
1931	79,997	9,919,635	francs 124=£
1932	81,587	10,116,807	francs 124=£
1933	85,544	10,607,515	francs 124=£

Comparative Table of Chief Imports.

	Value.			
	1930.	*1931.*	*1932.*	*1933.*
	£	£	£	£
Beer	968	1,150	1,574	1,240
Benzine (petrol)	7,761	3,238	3,288	3,741
Biscuits	1,234	780	385	496
Tinned goods and groceries	8,362	2,720	1,603	1,508
Cartridges	1,170	280	240	247
Tobacco	5,363	5,545	4,466	5,140
Cement	1,685	780	599	536
Lubricating oils	1,952	1,285	273	1,606
Spirits	1,706	1,635	2,569	1,590
Tinned milk	1,476	1,050	879	943
Kerosene	3,600	2,520	2,340	3,329
Rice	22,661	11,254	7,325	4,467
Flour	6,137	2,815	2,164	2,143
Sugar	2,420	1,610	1,570	1,259
Soap	1,141	843	613	575
Tinned fish	1,883	1,180	462	1,850
Wines (fine)	1,980	1,010	1,424	1,000
Wines (ordinaire)	4,346	4,096	2,493	2,817
Gunny bags	2,830	4,857	3,688	4,166
Building materials	6,612	3,561	3,953	5,701
Agricultural machinery, boats, motor cars ...	2,210	674	793	2,189
Potatoes	1,000	456	347	298
Tea		1,240	789	1,190

Imports for the year 1933 show an increase of £3,957 over those for 1932. The decreases under wines, beer, spirits, groceries, rice and sugar, have been more than offset by the increases in petrol, kerosene, lubricating oils, biscuits, tobacco, tinned fish, gunny bags, building materials and machinery. This is to some extent due to the revival of recruiting of native labour consequent on the large numbers of Tonkinese repatriated.

The exchange continued to assist imports from British sources, particularly from Australia which now claims some 60 per cent. of the New Hebrides import trade. The chief articles so imported are flour, beer, fine and " trade " cigarettes and tobacco, tinned meats and fish, potatoes, butter, onions, tinned milk, biscuits, haberdashery, millinery, and clothing. Some of these articles formerly came almost exclusively from France. Imports from Japan are now becoming considerable and are on the increase.

The principal importing firms are (British) Messrs. Burns, Philp (South Sea) Company, Limited, (French) Comptoirs Français des Nouvelles-Hébrides, la Compagnie Franco-Hébridaise, and Messrs. Gubbay Frères.

There are three steamers employed in the inter-island trade. Two of these (one British and one French) carry trade rooms, where the settler is able to purchase most of his requirements and is able to

dispose of his produce. The third vessel (French) confines itself to the freighting of cargo and the carriage of passengers. In addition there are a number of small trading craft operating chiefly among natives, some of which are native owned.

There are three large stores in Vila, one of which is British. In addition there are numerous small shops in the hands of Japanese and Chinese traders. There are two stores at Segond Channel, Santo, both French.

During the year under review the small European trader passed through an extremely difficult period. The price of copra became so low that the natives have rarely had the wherewithal to purchase from him more than the barest essentials. He has been forced in an attempt to stimulate his turnover to buy copra at a dangerously small margin and also to reduce his profit on trade goods to the lowest possible limit. Native trading seems to be on the increase and is growing at the expense of the white trader. The native trader, owing to his lower standard of living, can usually undersell the European.

VIII.—WAGES AND COST OF LIVING.

Labour and Wages.

NATIVE LABOUR.

Native labour may be divided into three main classes :—

(*a*) plantation labour, boats' crews of local small vessels, employees of traders, Government messengers, Constabulary, etc., on contract and otherwise ;

(*b*) domestic labour ;

(*c*) casual labour, working on steamers, wharves, Government works, etc.

The supply of native labour during the year was equal to the demand. The tendency to employ " free labour " (not under contract) is increasing except in the case of certain plantations which have difficulty in obtaining labour near at hand. The growth of a " free " labour market is a satisfactory feature as it has a tendency to bring the wages and treatment of labour into more exact relationship with prices. It is doubtful, however, if certain plantations would ever be able to be run without a few contracted men at least to ensure the proper harvesting of certain seasonal crops.

In consequence of the gradual disappearance of Tonkinese, French employers have been recruiting natives freely.

The native's aversion to long term engagements is as pronounced as ever ; he prefers to work without engagement if possible and will not usually bind himself for more than twelve months.

By nature the native of the New Hebrides is lazy and of mercurial temperament. He will not work unless circumstances

compel him. His wants are less simple than formerly as he has become accustomed to European food and clothing. When times are good labour is exceedingly scarce and dear, as the majority of natives can obtain all they want by the sale of the produce of their lands, and with a minimum of exertion. When times are bad, like the present, the point arrives when the native, having exhausted his hoarded savings, cannot, without a very great deal of exertion himself, obtain the luxuries he desires. He is then faced with the choice of work on his own account, which is unpalatable, or, on the other hand, with either reverting to his natural state in the matter of food (of which there is plenty) and clothing or working for wages. This stage was reached during the course of 1931. Since then employers have found no difficulty in obtaining labour and the production of native-made copra has fallen off to a very considerable extent. Conversely, traders have found it difficult to obtain a living, there being no money to buy their wares.

Domestic labour remains by comparison difficult to secure, as the native, neither male or female, takes kindly to this form of service and can rarely be prevailed upon to stay with an employer for an extended period. For this reason the New Hebridean servant is not efficient, and can rarely be trained to the finer domestic arts.

Wages of most classes of native labour have now undergone considerable reduction, but not in ratio to the depression of prices. During the year the current rates of wages were :—

Class (*a*)—

Plantation labourers ...	10s. to £1 10s. 0d. per month with food and clothing, whether under engagement or not, generally together with piece-work.
Boats' crews	
Traders' employees ...	
Government messengers ...	£3 per month without food.
Constabulary	From £2 per month with food and clothing.

Note.—Local or casual labour is frequently employed on plantations for picking cotton and seasonal crops on a daily wage from 1s. to 2s. with or without food, according to arrangement.

Class (*b*)—

Domestic labour	£1 to £2 per month with food and clothing, whether engaged or not.

Class (*c*)—

Casual labour, other than plantation.	2s. to 4s. per day with or without food and according to skill.

The employment of natives under engagement of any kind is governed by the provisions of the Protocol of 1914, and, in the case of British dependents, also by national legislation.

Asiatic Labour.

Asiatic labour consists of :—

(*a*) Indo-Chinese coolies imported under contract for the use of French settlers by the French Government. These Tonkinese are, generally speaking, satisfactory, being of a superior intelligence to the native, if not so physically strong, and are naturally hard workers. They receive approximately 120 francs per month per head, plus food, clothing, lodging, etc. The cost to the settler is now considerably higher than that of native labour as, in addition to wages, he is charged for the cost of transportation to and from Indo-China, Government inspection, and medical surveillance, etc. Owing to the depression a large number have been repatriated, there remaining at the end of the year some 1,560 against 1,800 at the end of 1932. There are also a very few Javanese and Chinese under contract.

(*b*) Free Chinese and Japanese labour of the artisan class. These are only a handful and work on daily wages which are unfixed and depend partly on skill and partly on demand. Such wages vary from 7s. 6d. to 15s. *per diem*. There are also a few Chinese employed as stewards, cooks, and firemen, on inter-island steamers at rates varying from £3 to £6 per month with rations.

Cost of Living.

The maintenance of a good standard of living among European residents is an important factor for the preservation of health and an equitable mental outlook, and it is desirable that it should be as high as circumstances permit. The general standard of European living is good. At Vila, the capital of the Group, living is more expensive than in other parts, as facilities for maintaining vegetable gardens and livestock are less. Market gardening is carried out by the Chinese community and by a few natives, and under normal conditions green vegetables can be obtained during seven to eight months of the year. The supply is generally unreliable being at times in excess of local requirements and at other times the reverse. Fresh meat of fair quality is obtainable from the local butchers, and arrangements for supplies of fresh milk can usually be made. Fish is difficult to obtain, and the quality is tropical. The stores maintain supplies of clothing, hosiery, boots, etc., but it is more desirable for wearing apparel to be obtained from Australia or Europe. Nearly all perishable food commodities are imported from Australia with the exception of rice

and sugar, of which a proportion is imported from Indo-China and Java.

The cost of living in the islands of the Group away from Vila is cheaper and generally more satisfactory. All European residents are able to maintain vegetable gardens and livestock and thus provide themselves with eggs, milk, butter, poultry and meat. The periodical visits of the island vessel supply them with such other commodities as they require.

The following table gives the average retail prices in the town of Vila during 1933 :—

Fresh milk	8d. to 10d. per quart.
Flour	2½d. to 3d. per lb.
Rice	1½d. to 3d. per lb.
Sugar	2½ to 4d. per lb.
Potatoes	2d. to 3d. per lb.
Fresh meat	8d. to 1s. 6d. per lb.
Onions	3d. per lb.
Butter	1s. 9d. to 2s. per lb.
Tea	3s. to 3s. 6d. per lb.
Coffee (local)	1s. 3d. per lb.
Eggs	2s. 6d. to 5s. per dozen.
Poultry	4s. to 7s. each.
Tinned meat	1s. to 2s. per lb.
Wood fuel	5s. 6d. to 11s. per cubic metre.
Kerosene	9s. to 10s. per tin (4 gallons).
Petrol	9s. 6d. to 10s. 6d. per tin (4 gallons).

IX.—EDUCATION AND WELFARE INSTITUTIONS.

There are no schools controlled or supported by the Condominium Government, nor are there any facilities for European children to receive anything but a primary education, which is not of a very high standard.

The town of Vila has three schools : (1) a school for girls, supported and controlled by the Sisters of the Sacred Heart Mission ; (2) a boys' school, supported and controlled by the Marist Mission ; and (3) an infants' school run by the French Government. Admission to these schools is not restricted to the children of Europeans and the entrance fees are purely nominal.

The British and French Missions in the Group have various good schools and training institutions for the benefit of the natives. The Presbyterian Mission maintains an excellent school at Tangoa, South Santo, and can accommodate up to sixty pupils. They also maintain other schools throughout the Group. The Melanesian Mission have a good school at Lolowai, Aoba, and schools in the Banks Group. The Seventh Day Adventist Mission have a utilitarian school at Aore Island, Santo, which is equipped with modern

machinery for teaching all kinds of woodcraft. The Marist Mission also maintains schools in various islands of the Group.

All these institutions carry out excellent work among the natives and deserve commendation.

The task of educating the New Hebridean has been left in the hands of the various mission bodies operating in the Group; but in order to appreciate the inestimable services rendered by these missions in educating and civilizing the wild inhabitants of these islands, a short sketch of missionary endeavour will be of assistance.

The island of Erromanga was the scene of the first essay to wean the native from heathenism, when in the year 1839 John Williams and Harris, under the auspices of the London Missionary Society, landed at Dillons Bay, and in the same year were killed by the natives in whose welfare they strove.

It was not until 1857 that any further attempt was made to bring civilization to the Erromangans. In that year the Reverend G. N. and Mrs. Gordon took up the work, but were subsequently murdered by the natives, to be followed by Gordon's brother, who perished in the same manner. The Gordons were followed by Mr. and Mrs. McNair. Mr. McNair died on the island and was followed by the Reverend Doctor Robertson, who, after many years of danger and hardship had the satisfaction of seeing the whole island under the civilizing influence of Christianity when he left the Group in 1920.

Erromanga is well named " The Martyr's Isle ".

In 1842 an endeavour was made by Messrs. Turner and Nisbet to convert the Tannese, but their efforts were not attended with success, and after a few months they were forced to flee, barely escaping with their lives. Sixteen years later the Reverend Doctor J. G. Paton took up the work on Tanna but, owing to the hostility of the natives, was compelled to abandon the island after four years. He settled on the adjacent island of Aniwa, where his efforts were attended with every success. Tanna was afterwards occupied by the Reverends Watt and Neilson, whose work materially contributed to the subjugation of the warlike Tannese.

About the year 1850 the control of the missions passed into the charge of the various Presbyterian Church Bodies in the Colonies, and in later years the more northern islands of the Group were endowed with missionaries. The following names figure prominently in the list of those devoted men and women who in the early days braved the hardships and dangers of this Group in the task of claiming its inhabitants for civilization: the Reverend Milne of Nguna; Doctors Mackenzie and Macdonald of Efate; Michelsen of Tongoa; Smail and Fraser of Epi; Morton and Watt-Leggatt of Malekula; Annand and Mackenzie of Santo.

Other workers in the New Hebrides mission-field include the Catholic, Melanesian, Church of Christ, and Seventh Day Adventist denominations.

The Catholic Mission was first established on the island of Aneityum in the year 1848, but their stay was not of long duration and the attempt was soon abandoned. They returned to the Group however in 1887, and since that date their influence has gradually extended to the whole Group with the exception of the southern islands, and the Banks and Torres. The year 1933, however, has seen the establishment by the Marist Mission of a post on the island of Tanna in the southern portion of the Group.

The Melanesian Mission was in the field about the year 1850, and by agreement with the Presbyterian Missions the northern part of the Group, comprising Aoba, Pentecost, Maeovo, and the Banks and Torres, as yet untouched by the Presbyterians, was abandoned as a Melanesian Mission sphere of influence.

It was on Aoba Island in the year 1905 that the Reverend Godden of this Mission, the latest of mission martyrs at native hands, was brutally murdered by a native of that island.

In 1912 the Seventh Day Adventists started operations on Efate, but later transferred their activities to Ambrym, Malekula, and Santo, and in 1932 to Tanna.

In the task of civilizing the native the importance of education was never lost sight of. Each mission village had its school, where the rudiments of reading and writing were imparted to young and old. To-day there are four good central schools, in addition to the mission station schools, where facilities are provided for primary education of the native. Of these the Training Institution established many years ago by the Presbyterian Mission at Tangoa renders excellent services in fashioning from the raw material teachers in whose care is confided the task of education. This institution suffered an irreparable loss during the year in the death of its Head and organiser, the Reverend F. G. Bowie, M.A., who had been over thirty-six years in the Group as a missionary. Another invaluable institution of this nature is the Melanesian Mission school on Aoba. The Catholic Mission school at Vila also renders good services in this direction. The year 1925 saw the Seventh Day Adventists installed on the island of Aore, where natives from all parts of the Group, in addition to their scholastic studies, receive practical instructions in various arts and crafts.

Apart from the good educational work achieved by the missions, there is the equally important and beneficial medical work undertaken by the Presbyterian Mission, about which much could be written. A few years ago this denomination maintained no less than four well-equipped hospitals in the Group. To-day there are two, one at Tanna and the other at Vila. These hospitals are primarily intended for native patients, but their services are no less appreciated by white sufferers. The hospital established at Dip Point, Ambrym, under the superintendence of Doctor Bowie, to whose skill and kindness, not only hundreds of natives but many

Europeans alive to-day owe their lives, will always be remembered in connexion with missionary endeavour in this Group. This hospital, in the year 1913, was engulfed, together with the adjoining mission station and native villages, in the tremendous volcanic outburst on that island, and to-day, where the hospital stood, is nothing but a shallow lake.

The Mission hospital at Vila was opened in 1912, and is a well appointed building standing on the small island of Iririki in Vila Harbour.

Tanna hospital has been in existence over 25 years and its beneficial services are well known and appreciated by all.

X.—COMMUNICATIONS AND TRANSPORT.

Shipping.

Europe.—A two-monthly service of the Messageries Maritimes line is maintained between the terminal points of Dunkirk and Noumea (New Caledonia), via Vila, on both inward and outward voyages. The route is via Tahiti, Panama, Martinique, and Marseilles, and the period of the voyage approximately 65 days between Vila and Marseilles. The following vessels are engaged in this service :—*Ville de Verdun*, *Ville de Strasbourg*, and *Ville d'Amiens*.

Australia.—The s.s. *Morinda* (Burns Philp line) and the s.s. *Laperouse* (Messageries Maritimes) maintain respectively six- and twelve-weekly communications with Sydney, New South Wales, the former via Norfolk Island and Lord Howe Island on the outward and homeward voyages from Sydney, and the latter via Lifou, Loyalty Islands, and Noumea, New Caledonia. The s.s. *Laperouse* also maintains a service with Indo-China. There are also periodical visits from " Tourist " steamers from Australia.

Dutch Line.—A regular service is also maintained by the Royal Packet Navigation Company's steamer *Van Rees* between Saigon and Noumea and Sydney, touching at Vila about every two months via Batavia, Papua and New Guinea.

New Caledonia.—Communication is maintained with Noumea by the s.s. *Laperouse* every twelve weeks, and by the Messageries line of steamers previously mentioned, approximately every two months. The French inter-island steamers also pay occasional visits to Noumea.

Inter-Island.—The following steamers make periodical voyages round the Group. They have no fixed itinerary but usually connect at Vila with the British or French mail vessels :—

S.S. *Makambo* (Burns, Philp (South Sea) Company), s.s. *Bucephale* (Messageries Maritimes) and s.s. *Pervenche* (privately owned).

The port of Vila is the port of entry in the Group. The tonnage entered and cleared during 1933 was as follows:—

ENTERED.

	Tons.	
British	34,615	(14 vessels).
French	102,922	(37 vessels).
Other	21,269	(9 vessels).
	158,806	(60 vessels).

CLEARED.

	Tons.	
British	34,615	(14 vessels).
French	105,583	(37 vessels).
Other	21,269	(9 vessels).
	161,467	(60 vessels).

Ports.

Vessels of any size can enter the Port of Vila but the number of anchorages for large vessels is limited. All loading and discharging is carried out in lighters as the wharves and jetties at Vila are not suitable for vessels exceeding 100 tons.

Railways.

There are no railways in the Group. A two-foot trolley rail track runs from the outskirts of Mélé to Vila—a distance of about four miles—and is used for various commercial purposes. The small wharves, privately-owned by the commercial houses in Vila, are also provided with rails for the transport on trolleys of merchandize and produce to and from the bulk store sheds.

Posts.

Mail communication from and to Europe and Australia is maintained by the mail steamers s.s. *Morinda* and s.s. *Laperouse*, which call at Vila and various island ports every six and twelve weeks respectively. These lines are subsidized by His Majesty's Government in the Commonwealth of Australia and the French Government, respectively. The mails, both inward and outward, are sorted at Vila and re-bagged for distribution round the Group by the inter-island steamers, which receive a grant from the Condominium Government for the services performed. The average time for European postal matter to reach Vila by the regular mail routes is 42 to 49 days. The Condominium Government has a postage stamp issue designed to represent the dual control. There are two sets of stamps—one British and one French. Both are inscribed in English and French currency.

The postal matter handled by the Vila Post Office for 1933 was as follows :—

	From or to British territory.		*From or to French territory.*		*From or to other places.*		*Total.*
	Received.	*Despatched.*	*Received.*	*Despatched.*	*Received.*	*Despatched.*	
Letters	24,000	19,000	55,000	38,000	3,000	2,000	141,000
Other articles ...	46,000	2,000	30,000	4,000	500	500	83,000
Registered articles ...	300	1,000	3,200	3,300	100	200	8,100
Totals ...	70,300	22,000	88,200	45,300	3,600	2,700	232,100

Radio-Telegraph.

Communication with the New Hebrides is by radio-telegraph. The Condominium Government maintains a station at Vila. The Station is powered at 1½ kilowatts and the call sign is F J X. Reception and transmission are carried out on wave lengths of 17 to 40 metres and 21 to 37 metres respectively and also on the 600 and 800 metre bands. A daily service is maintained with the station at Suva, Fiji, (V P D and V R P) and with the French Government station at Noumea, New Caledonia (F J P). Severe statics interfere with the service on the intermediate bands during the hot and rainy season from November to April. The terminal charge of the Vila Station is 3d. or 1 franc 50 centimes per word (minimum charge 1s. 6d.). The rate per word for telegrams despatched from Vila to Australia and the United Kingdom is as follows :—

To	*Ordinary.*	*Deferred.*	*D.L.T.*
Australia	1s. or 6·20 frs.	—	—
United Kingdom ...	2s. 5d. or 14·93 frs.	1s. 2d. or 7·47 frs.	10d. or 4·98 frs. (Minimum charge of 25 words.)

The traffic handled by the Station during the year under report was as follows :—

Class.	*Words received.*	*Words despatched.*
Official	29,980	34,801
Private	12,094	13,028
Relayed	6,308	—
L.C.O.	460	396
Relayed L.C.O.	245	—
D.L.T.	746	315
Relayed D.L.T.	98	—
X.L.T.	—	60
Total... ...	49,931	48,600

Total words received and despatched = 98,531.

Roads.

With the exception of the islands of Efate, Tanna and Tongoa, there are very few public highways in the Group suitable for wheeled transport. Tanna has several good roads, one of which traverses the island. There is also a fair road on the island of Tongoa. Vila, the capital and seat of Government, has several roads and these link up with the outlying districts.

Telephones.

Telephone communication is established in the town of Vila and the outlying districts. The system is operated by a central exchange and the service is continuous. There are 60 telephones and 86 miles of wire. During the hurricane season the service is liable to interruption. There are no telephone systems in the other islands of the Group. The annual subscription rate is £4 (unlimited calls).

XI.—BANKING, CURRENCY, AND WEIGHTS AND MEASURES.

There are no banks in the New Hebrides. The Condominium Government carries out its banking operations through Noumea (New Caledonia) and Sydney (Australia). It has been the practice in the past for the larger British and French commercial houses to act as bankers for their clients, but depressed conditions have severely restricted these operations. The Banque de l'Indochine, at Noumea, issues a local note which circulates in the New Hebrides and is guaranteed by the Bank of France.

The currencies circulating in the New Hebrides Group are sterling, Australian and French currency. Owing to the variation in the rates of exchange of sterling and Australian currency, the position of the three currencies is complicated. The situation is aggravated by the lack of local banking facilities.

The Condominium Government adopts the rate of 124 francs to the pound sterling. Sterling therefore remains at gold parity with the franc for Government purposes, while Australian currency remains at the prevailing discount rate against sterling.

Australian currency is used by British residents throughout the Group while sterling is confined mostly to Government transactions. The average local commercial rates of exchange during the year for sterling and Australian money in relation to the franc were: pound sterling = 84 francs, and pound Australian = 75 francs. The British and French systems of weights and measures are both employed throughout the Group.

XII.—PUBLIC WORKS.

The Condominium maintains a Public Works Department normally controlled by a Superintendent and an Assistant. No works of outstanding importance were undertaken during the year, operations being confined mainly to essential repairs to buildings, and the upkeep of the more important roads.

In normal times building material is mostly imported from Australia. Dwelling houses and other buildings are all made of wood and galvanized iron owing to the prevalence of earth tremors.

The construction and maintenance of roads and bridges is carried out partly by the Public Works Department and partly by local contract under Public Works supervision. Semi-metalled roads exist in Efate for a few miles round Vila. There are unmetalled or semi-metalled roads in various parts of the Group, the best being those in the islands of Tanna and Tongoa, which have been made by the natives themselves to facilitate the cartage of produce to the beaches. Such roads are comparatively easy of construction as the underlying hard coral is generally close to the surface and thus cartage of material is minimized. The chief difficulty in maintaining roads is the keeping down of bush.

The use of motor vehicles, and in some islands ox-wagons, has increased the importance of road construction. Most plantations now keep motor transport for their own use and maintain very fair motor ways within their own boundaries. These frequently link up with similar roads on adjoining properties. In this manner most of the existing public roads (now maintained by the Condominium) have come into being and it is probable that public roads and island arteries of the future will be similarly evolved.

The Public Works Department also maintains the harbour light system of Vila Harbour. This consists of an automatic lighthouse on Pango Point, which guides vessels to the mouth of Vila Harbour, and a pair of leading lights on the hills above the harbour which give a line to the deep water entrance. A green light shows the lateral margin of safety for large ships.

XIII.—JUSTICE, POLICE, AND PRISONS.

Justice.

The Convention of 1914 provided for the immediate introduction of three Courts, namely the Joint Court, and the French and British National Courts, and the subsequent formation of two others—Courts of First Instance and Native Courts.

The scope and functions of these Courts is briefly as follows:—

(1) *Joint Court.*—The Court is composed of a British and a French Judge, with a President of neutral nationality. There is also a Public Prosecutor and a Native Advocate. The Joint

Court is a Court of final adjudication in matters of purely Condominium nature. Broadly speaking, and subject to certain exceptions, its civil jurisdiction is confined to certain proceedings in respect of rights over immovable property—its chief function being that of a land Court governing the registration of indefeasible titles to land. It may also settle cases between any parties, native or non-native, brought before it by consent of both. Its criminal jurisdiction, broadly speaking, is confined to offences—(*a*) connected with the recruitment of native labourers, or (*b*) committed by natives against non-natives, or (*c*) committed by natives against natives in areas where the Native Code is in force and involving a penalty of over one year's confinement, or (*d*) against the Convention, or Joint Regulations passed in pursuance thereof, in areas where no Court of First Instance exists.

There is an appeal to the Joint Court from all judgments of Courts of First Instance and from important civil judgments of Native Courts. The Joint Court also has certain revisionary powers in criminal cases of Native Courts, and judgments of Courts of First Instance involving sentence of imprisonment.

(2) *Courts of First Instance.*—The composition of these Courts consists of a British and a French District Agent with a British or French Assessor chosen by lot. Their jurisdiction is over breaches of the 1914 Convention, or of Joint Regulations made thereunder, except those connected with the recruitment of native labour.

(3) *Native Courts.*—These are composed of either a British or French District Agent, assisted by two native Assessors. The British and French Agents preside over the Courts in turn, month and month about. A necessary corollary to the full and complete functioning of these Courts is the promulgation in the area of the Native Code.

(4) and (5) *National Courts.*—The British and French Governments have established in the Group, in conformity with their existing legal systems, Courts with jurisdiction over all civil cases, other than those reserved to the Joint Court, and over all criminal cases in which a non-native is the defendant. In civil cases the jurisdiction over actions between non-natives belongs in some cases to the Court of the Power under whose law the contract was concluded, or the act or thing in question originated, and in other cases to the Court of the Power to which the defendant belongs. In criminal cases, non-natives are justiciable by the Court of their own nationality or the nationality applied to them.

Courts of First Instance have so far been set up in Central Districts Nos. 1 and 2.

A Code of Native Criminal Law has been instituted and two Native Courts—one in the Central District No. 1 and one in

the Southern District—have been formed to administer Penal Law only within their competence and jurisdiction.

Police.

The policing of the Group is carried out by two separate forces of armed native constabulary, British and French, each in the charge of a National Commandant under the orders of the respective Resident Commissioners. The headquarters are at Vila, and small detachments are located at the District Agencies on the islands of Tanna, Malekula, and Santo, respectively, in order to assist the District Agents in the carrying out of their duties.

The British force is composed of natives recruited from the islands of the New Hebrides, and the French force partly of New Hebrideans and Loyalty Islanders. In addition, the French have enrolled a number of Tonkinese police, for the purpose of facilitating police operations among the Tonkinese coolies in the Group.

The duties of the native constabulary consist in the maintenance of law and order among the native population of the more civilised areas, general police and patrol work, the guarding of native prisoners, and the repression of native disorders.

Both the British and French Commandants, in addition to their duties as police officers of the Condominium, also act as police officers in so far as their own nationals are concerned, and are charged with the conduct of police cases before their respective National Courts.

The cost of the maintenance of the two forces is defrayed by the respective national Governments, except when the two corps are acting jointly, when the expenses are met from Condominium funds.

The usual term of enlistment for natives of the Group is two years. Some re-engage for further terms. The civilising influence of the period spent under discipline combined with the regular food and regular hours of work, is an important factor in the lives of these natives. When they return to their homes they have acquired a certain knowledge of, and respect for, the law and white man's justice which cannot fail to be of assistance to them and their fellow islanders in their everyday life and their relations with Europeans.

Prisons.

Each Government maintains its own national prison, which is situated in the town of Vila, and accommodation is provided for both natives and whites. The cost of maintenance of prisoners sentenced by the national tribunals is met from national funds, and that of natives sentenced by the Resident Commissioners and the Native and Mixed Courts, from Condominium funds.

There is no Condominium prison staff. Each Commandant acts as prison keeper and is responsible for the supervision of prisoners

placed in his charge. He is assisted by police constables who act as warders.

In addition to the national prisons at headquarters each District Agency is provided with a temporary lock-up in which natives under short sentences are confined.

The class of native prisoner with which the Administration is called upon to deal is almost exclusively confined to those sentenced for breaches of local liquor laws and offenders against the provisions of the Native Penal Code.

Native prisoners are employed in works of general utility, such as the making and cleaning of roads, weeding Government paddocks, transport of material to various Government buildings, etc.

The daily average of native prisoners confined in the British prison was 3·12 and in the French prison 11·8. No deaths occurred in the British prison. Generally speaking, the health of prisoners was good.

The following judgments, other than civil, were recorded by the various Courts :—

	Nature of Judgment.	
	Fine.	*Imprisonment.*
Joint Court	—	2*
Courts of First Instance	21	2
Native Courts	11	16
Resident Commissioners' Court ...	15	51
British National Court	—	—
Totals	47	71

XIV.—LEGISLATION.

There was no important legislation during the year.

XV.—PUBLIC FINANCE AND TAXATION.

By Article 5 of the Convention of 1914 each of the two Powers is required to defray the expenses of its own Administration in the Group. The cost of the joint services is defrayed out of local taxation. The joint services include finance, posts and telegraphs, customs, public works, ports and harbours, public health, the Joint Court and the Summary Courts and lands registry. In the event of revenue from local taxation proving insufficient to meet jointly approved expenditure, the two Signatory Powers contribute the deficit in equal proportions. Since the year 1921 the Condominium has been self-supporting, but owing to the falling off

* Judgments of Court of First Instance, Central District No. 1, revised by Joint Court.

in revenue, due to the general commercial depression, contributions were required in the years 1931, 1932 and 1933, from each Government.

Revenue and Expenditure.

CONDOMINIUM REVENUE.

Year.	*French Currency. Francs.*	*British Currency. £*	*Remarks.*
1927	3,037,711 or	24,497	*Converted at* francs 124 = £
1928	3,463,551 or	27,932	francs 124 = £
1929	3,549,562 or	28,624	francs 124 = £
1930	2,402,829 or	19,378	francs 124 = £
1931	1,592,941 or	12,846	francs 124 = £
1932	1,242,635 or	10,021	francs 124 = £
1933	1,379,644 or	11,126	francs 124 = £

CONDOMINIUM EXPENDITURE.

Year.	*French Currency. Francs.*	*British Currency. £*	*Remarks.*
1927	2,220,479 or	17,907	*Converted at* francs 124 = £
1928	3,568,404 or	28,777	francs 124 = £
1929	3,210,639 or	25,892	francs 124 = £
1930	3,509,011 or	28,298	francs 124 = £
1931	3,013,698 or	24,304	francs 124 = £
1932	2,455,448 or	19,802	francs 124 = £
1933	2,358,346 or	19,019	francs 124 = £

The chief sources of Condominium revenue are import and export taxes and port dues, which normally account for some four-fifths of the receipts. Other sources of income are postal and telegraphic receipts, Court fees and fines, survey fees, trading licences, taxes on vehicles, lands registry fees, and miscellaneous receipts.

The following is a brief table of the principal import duties :—

General merchandize, unspecified ...	6 per cent. *ad valorem*.
Gramophones, records, perfumery, lace, rifles, revolvers, and cartridges.	20 ,, ,,
Spirits and tobacco	12 ,, ,,
Wines and petrol, lubricating and combustible oils.	5 ,, ,,
Kerosene	3 ,, ,,
Shotguns and cartridges, detonators	100 ,, ,,
Beer	6d. per gallon.
Dynamite	9d. per lb.
Fuse	2d. per 24 feet.

No duty is levied on the following articles :—

Live stock, books, cereals and seeds, ship's biscuit, fertilizers, medical appliances and drugs for hospitals, microscopes, plants, vaccines and lymphs, fresh vegetables and fruit.

The main heads of taxation and actual yields for the year 1933 are tabulated as follows :—

	£
Inland Revenue (trading and other licences) ...	565
Post Office	503
Port dues	919
Court and Survey fees	262
Import duties	7,164
Export duties	900
Wireless Telegraph (gross)	755
Lands registry	4

EXPENDITURE ON SERVICES ENTIRELY BRITISH.

	£
1927-28	16,048
1928-29	11,966
1929-30	9,506
1930-31	10,314
1931-32	9,540
1932-33	9,106

This expenditure is defrayed from funds provided by Parliament on Civil Estimates, Vote for Colonial and Middle Eastern Services, Class II, 9. Certain miscellaneous receipts, such as Court fees and fines, and rent, totalling about a hundred pounds annually, are applied in reduction of the Vote on which expenditure is provided for. The expenditure on British services includes, among other things, the personal emoluments of the British national staff, Police Force, and District Agents, and maintenance of houses of officers and police barracks.

The French Government maintains at national expense services similar to the above.

XVI.—MISCELLANEOUS.

Lands and Survey.

Land owned by settlers in the New Hebrides was acquired originally from native owners, either by purchase or barter. Ownership at the present day is based on these native deeds, but such deeds do not constitute a valid title until judgment has been pronounced upon them by the Joint Court. The procedure in regard to obtaining indefeasible titles to land in the New Hebrides

is set out in Articles 22 to 27 of the Protocol of 1914. Approximately 1,000 claims have been lodged in the Joint Court representing an area of 2,150,000 acres, more or less.

The registration of Efate and adjacent islands was completed during the year 1932, all applications for title, etc., having been finally adjudicated.

Survey of claims on the islands of the Southern Group was completed during the year and those of Epi and adjacent islands will be started in 1934.

The speed with which titles are granted is dependent to a large extent on the progress of land surveys of the properties affected, and of the claims of opposing applicants for title.

A staff of surveyors is attached to the Court, but owing to the difficult nature of the country to be surveyed and identified, progress is necessarily slow. For financial reasons the staff of surveyors has recently been reduced.

In the grant of land titles, due consideration is given to the needs of the indigenous population that may be occupying lands coming up for registration. The Court instructs its surveyors to report on such matters in the course of their work, and is guided by such reports in deciding the desirability or necessity of making native reserves. The Protocol provides for the appointment of an official Native Advocate by the two Governments to watch over native interests in land matters and to bring to the notice of the Court instances of usurpation of land by settlers, as well as to assist them in opposing claims before the Court. The Torrens system of land registration has been adapted to the New Hebrides.

Atmospheric Disturbances.

A hurricane of great intensity visited the Group during April, 1933. Extensive damage to plantations and buildings occurred throughout the islands, and the Administration found it necessary to adopt food relief measures in some areas. Three lives were lost at sea.

General.

Depressed prices and conditions for primary production continued throughout 1933 and the operations of planter, merchant, and trader were further restricted.

During June, H.M.S. *Dunedin* flying the Broad Pendant of the Commodore Commanding the New Zealand Station (Captain F. Burges Watson, D.S.O.), H.M.S. *Laburnum* (Commander R. Ramsbotham), and the French Light Cruiser *Savorgnan de Brazza* (Captain Rosati), visited Vila and subsequently made a tour of the Group.

During May, Monsieur A. Carlotti (Gouverneur des Colonies), Resident Commissioner for the French Republic, proceeded on leave to France and Monsieur H. Sautot (Administrateur-en-Chef des Colonies) assumed duty as French Resident Commissioner. Monsieur Jore (Gouverneur des Colonies), High Commissioner for France in the New Hebrides, proceeded on duty to Africa, and Monsieur Siadous assumed duty at Noumea, New Caledonia, as French High Commissioner.

The rainfall in the Group was almost continuous throughout the year and amounted to some 40 or 50 per cent. above the average. It was considerably in excess of requirements and hindered rather than helped the maturing and preparation of crops.

APPENDIX.

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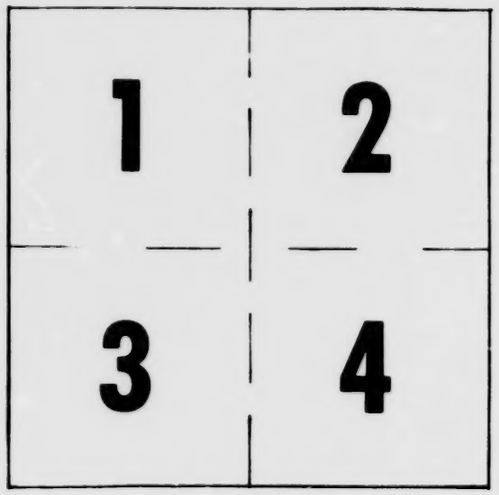

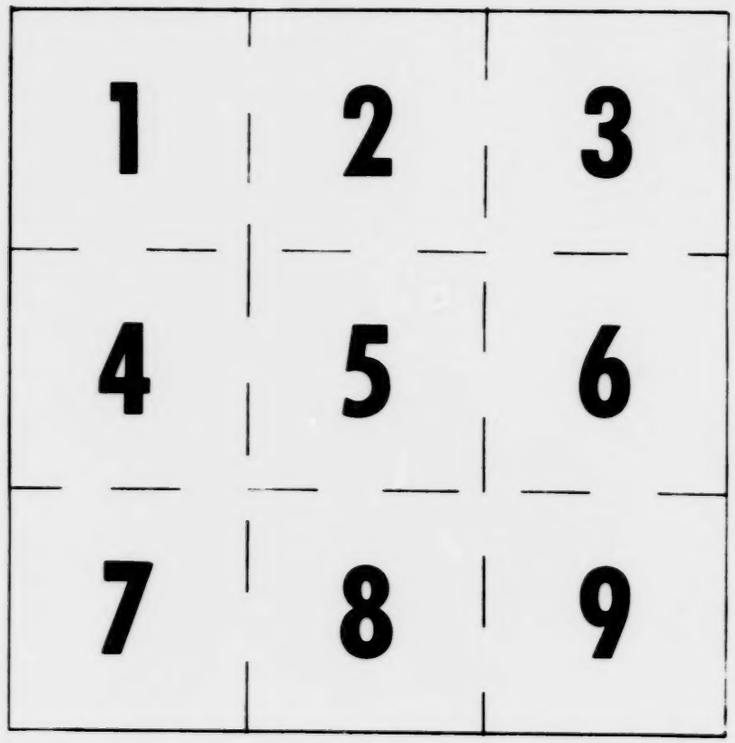

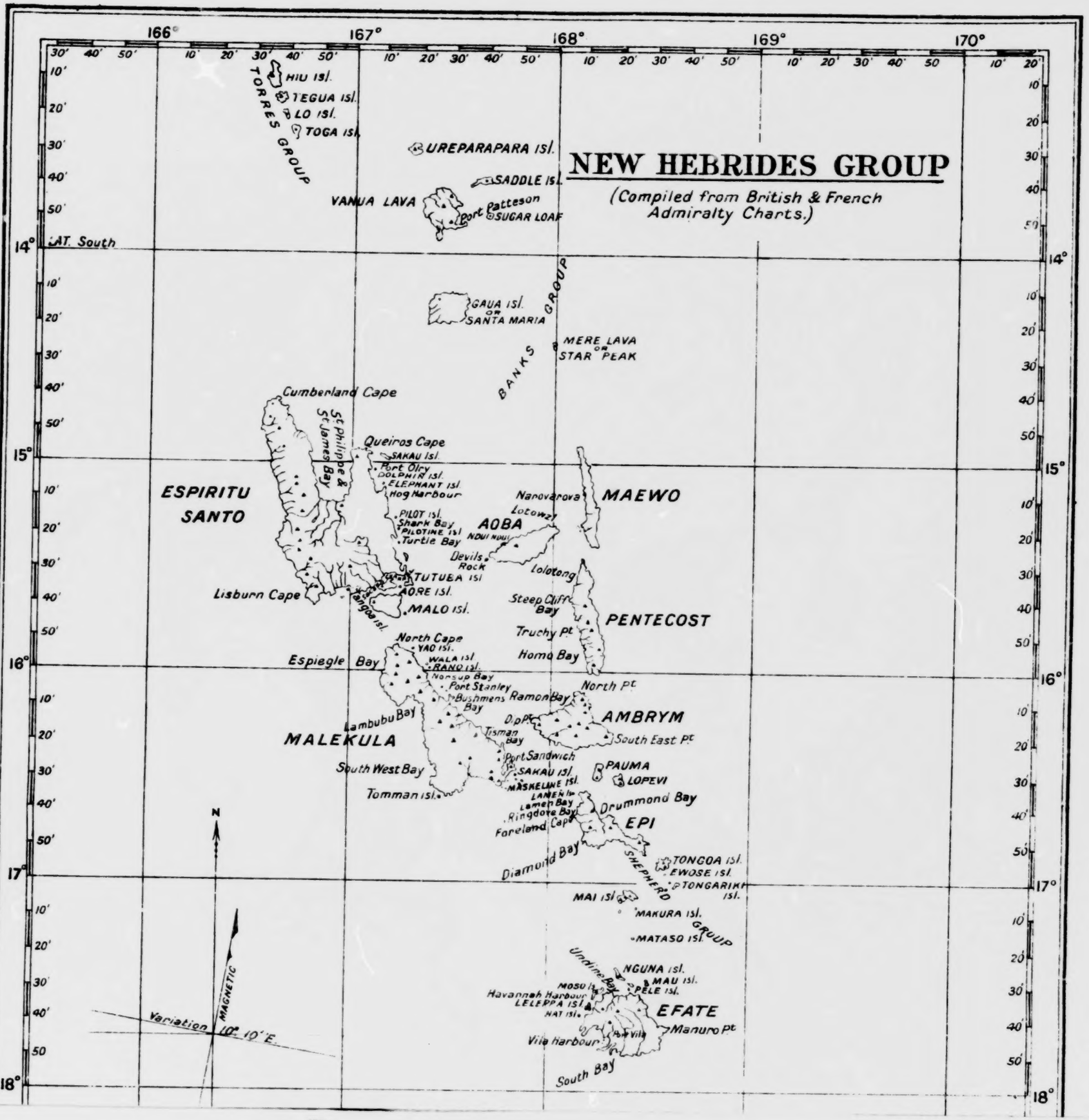
NEW HEBRIDES GROUP
(Compiled from British & French Admiralty Charts.)
166°
167°
168°
169°
170°
14°
15°
16°
17°
18°
HIU ISL.
TEGUA ISL.
PLO ISL.
TOGA ISL.
TORRES GROUP
UREPARAPARA ISL.
SADDLE ISL.
VANUA LAVA
Port Patteson
SUGAR LOAF
AT. South
GAUA ISL. OR SANTA MARIA
BANKS GROUP
MERE LAVA
STAR OR PEAK
Cumberland Cape
St Philippe &
St James Bay
Queiros Cape
SAKAU ISL.
Port Olry
DOLPHIN ISL.
ELEPHANT ISL.
Hog Harbour
ESPIRITU SANTO
PILOT ISL.
Shark Bay
PILOTINE ISL.
Turtle Bay
Nanovarova
Lotowai
AOBA
NDUI NDUI
MAEWO
Devils Rock
TUTUBA ISL.
AORE ISL.
MALO ISL.
Lisburn Cape
Tangoa ISL.
Lolotong
Steep Cliff Bay
PENTECOST
Truchy Pt.
North Cape
YAO ISL.
WALA ISL.
RANO ISL.
Homo Bay
Espiegle Bay
Nonsup Bay
Port Stanley
Bushmens Bay
Ramon Bay
North Pt.
AMBRYM
Lambubu Bay
MALEKULA
Tisman bay
D.p.pt.
South East Pt.
Port Sandwich
South West Bay
SAKAU ISL.
MASKELINE ISL.
PAUMA
LOPEVI
Tomman ISL.
LANEN IS.
Lamen Bay
Ringdove Bay
Foreland Cape
Drummond Bay
EPI
Diamond Bay
SHEPHERD GROUP
TONGOA ISL.
EWOSE ISL.
TONGARIKI ISL.
MAI ISL.
MAKURA ISL.
MATASO ISL.
Undine Bay
NGUNA ISL.
MAU ISL.
PELE ISL.
MOSO IS.
Havannah Harbour
LELEPPA ISL.
NAT ISL.
EFATE
Manuro Pt.
Vila Harbour
Vila
South Bay
N
MAGNETIC
Variation 10° 10' E.

GAUA ISL. OR SANTA MARIA

BANKS GROUP

MERE LAVA OR STAR PEAK

Cumberland Cape

St Philippe & St James Bay

Queiros Cape

SAKAU ISL.

Port Olry

DOLPHIN ISL.

ELEPHANT ISL.

Hog Harbour

ESPIRITU SANTO

PILOT ISL.

Shark Bay

PILOTINE ISL

Turtle Bay

AOBA

NDUI NDUI

Nanovarova

Lotowzy

MAEWO

Devils Rock

TUTUBA ISL

AORE ISL.

Lisburn Cape

Tangoa ISL.

MALO ISL.

Lolotong

Steep Cliff Bay

Truchy Pt

PENTECOST

North Cape

YAO ISL.

Espie Ie Bay

WALA ISL

RANO ISL.

Homo Bay

Norsup Bay

Port Stanley

Bushmens Bay

Ramon Bay

North Pt

Lambubu Bay

MALEKULA

D.P.Pt

AMBRYM

Tisman Bay

South East Pt

Port Sandwich

South West Bay

SAKAU ISL.

PAUMA

LOPEVI

MASKELINE ISL.

Tomman ISL.

LAMEN Ie

Lamen Bay

Ringdove Bay

Drummond Bay

Foreland Cape

EPI

Diamond Bay

SHEPHERD

TONGOA ISL.

EWOSE ISL.

TONGARIKI ISL.

MAI ISL

MAKURA ISL.

MATASO ISL.

GROUP

Undine Bay

NGUNA ISL.

MAU ISL.

PELE ISL.

Moso Is

Havannah Harbour

LELEPPA ISL

HAT ISL.

EFATE

Manuro Pt

Vila

Vila Harbour

South Bay

N

MAGNETIC

Variation 10° 10' E.

Elisabeth Bay

Port Narevin

Dillon Bay

Cook Bay

ERROMANGA

South Bay

20 0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100 Statute Miles

20 0 20 40 60 80 100 100 Kilometres

ANIWA

Waisisi Bay

White Sands

TANNA

Lenakel Bay

Port Resolution

Inlau Pt

FUTUNA

Vila. 25th Feb. 1929.

Port Patrick

ANEITYUM

Anelgahaut Bay

166° 167° 168° E of Greenwich. 169° 170°

15° 16° 17° 18° 19° 20°

10' 20' 30' 40' 50'

713, 1821A 3262. 500/10/34.

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ANNUAL REPORT ON THE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC PROGRESS OF THE PEOPLE OF THE NEW HEBRIDES, 1934

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I.—GEOGRAPHY, CLIMATE, AND HISTORY.

Geography.

The New Hebrides lie between the 13th and 21st degrees of South latitude, and the 166th and 170th degrees of East longitude, and are of an area of roughly 5,700 square miles.

The Group includes those of the Banks and Torres, the former lying a few miles due north of the main Group, and the latter about 40 miles to the north-west of the Banks the whole forming an irregular double chain some 440 miles in length.

The largest island of the Group is Santo, of an area of approximately 1,500 square miles, and a coastline of about 200 miles. The southern and western sides are very mountainous and rugged, some of the ranges rising to a height of over 6,000 feet. The next largest island is Malekula, which although very much broken up by mountain ranges is not so mountainous as Santo.

Other larger islands in their order of importance are Efate, Ambrym, Erromanga, Epi, Aoba, Pentecost and Maeovo, and Gaua and Vanua Lava of the Banks Group. In addition to these are some 80 small islands and islets.

There are three active volcanoes in the Group situated on the islands of Tanna, Ambrym and Lopevi, respectively. The first two are in a constant state of eruption, and the last named somewhat quiescent, emitting smoke and vapour at irregular intervals.

The Group possesses four good harbours, Vila and Havannah Harbours situated on the island of Efate, and Ports Sandwich and Stanley on Malekula, besides a number of good sheltered anchorages such as the Segond Channel and Pallicollo on Santo, Ringdove Bay on Epi, The Maskelynes off South Malekula, Undine Bay on Efate and Anelgahaut on Aneityum.

The Headquarters of the Administration are situated on the shores of Vila Harbour, which is also the chief commercial centre of the Group. Other important settlements are located at Epi, Malekula, and the Segond Channel, Santo.

The group is generally well watered. On the larger islands are several small rivers navigable to boats and small motor craft for a distance of some miles. The only lake of any size in the Group is found on top of the island of Gaua in the Banks Group, and is some four miles in circumference.

Climate.

The New Hebrides islands are classed as unhealthy. The climate, although very enervating is not worse than that of many other tropical places. The year is divided up, generally speaking, into two seasons, the hot and wet season, commencing in November and ending in April, and the dry and cool season from May to October. Of late, however, the tendency is for the line of demarcation to become less clear, there being considerable periods of drought in the rainy season and vice versa in the dry season. The temperature in the islands of Efate ranges from a minimum of about 60° F. in the cool season to a maximum of about 89° F. in the hot. The hot season is the most unhealthy owing to the extreme humidity and the prevalence of mosquitoes. Also it is so enervating as to make recovery from an illness somewhat prolonged. The cool season is, generally speaking, healthy and very pleasant. The southern islands of the Group are cooler and healthier than the northern—the latter being about 7° F. warmer on the average.

History.

The New Hebrides Group was discovered by the Spanish explorer de Quiros in the year 1606. Under the impression that he had at last found the long-sought Southern Continent, the quest for which occupied the navigators of this period, he called it "Tierra Austrialis del Espiritu Santo". He anchored in a large bay to which he gave the name of St. Phillip and St. James, and on the shores of a river flowing into that bay he established the settlesent of La Nuova Jerusalem. To the port which undoubtedly existed in those days he gave the name of Vera Cruz. This island is to-day known as Santo. Owing to sickness, and dissensions

with the natives the settlement was soon abandoned, and to-day, so far as is known, no traces of it exist. The port of Vera Cruz has likewise disappeared, nor can its original site be traced along the 40 odd miles of coastline forming the bay.

Nothing more was heard of the Group until some 160 years later, when in 1768, the French navigator Bougainville passed to the southward of de Quiro's discovery, and sailed between the islands known to-day as Santo and Malekula, thus disproving de Quiro's claim to the discovery of the great Southern Continent. The strait through which he passed still bears his name. On the same voyage he discovered the islands of Pentecost, Aoba, and Maeovo, to which he gave the name of the Cyclades.

It remained, however, for the great navigator Captain Cook to discover and chart the greater part of the Group in the year 1774, when, entering the Group from the north, he sailed to the southward, discovering and naming the majority of the islands which form the southern chain of the Group. It is recorded that among other places visited he spent some 15 days in the snug little harbour of Port Resolution on the island of Tanna. Since those days, however, the floor of the harbour has risen, and where Captain Cook anchored in four fathoms of water, to-day a small launch will scarcely float.

Among other early visitors may be cited Laperouse who is supposed to have visited the Group in 1788; and d'Entrecasteaux, who came in search of Laperouse in 1793.

In the same year the Banks Islands were sighted by Bligh on the occasion of his famous voyage in an open boat to Timor after the mutiny of the *Bounty*.

Dumont d'Urville, Belcher, and Markham, are among the early voyagers whose accounts of these islands are of interest.

By virtue of the Anglo-French Convention of 16th November, 1887, whereby, among other things, each nation agreed not to exercise a separate control over the Group, a Joint Naval Commission was appointed, consisting of the respective Captains and two Officers from each of the two warships which then paid periodical visits to the Group. The Commission was charged with the protection of the lives and property of the subjects of the two nations—France and England—in the islands.

By the year 1895 a number of British and French subjects had settled in the Group and the necessity was felt for some jurisdiction to deal with their disputes, in consequence of which an Arbitration Court was established by the colonists, but the Joint Naval Commission pronounced its veto and the Court was dissolved.

In 1902 the Group had assumed sufficient importance to necessitate the appointment of Resident Commissioners to deal with such judicial cases as came within their jurisdiction. In 1902 the first British Resident Commissioner was appointed, the French Government having a short time previously appointed a similar officer.

II.—GOVERNMENT.

By the Convention of 20th October, 1906, between the United Kingdom and France, British-French Condominium Government was established. The executive consists of a British and French Resident Commissioner acting in concert, assisted by a staff of Officers. The Administrative Departments of the Condominium are staffed by Officers of both nationalities who are subject to the control of the Resident Commissioners acting jointly. Each Power retains sovereignty over its own nationals. The seat of Government is at Vila on the island of Efate. Condominium Agents of both nationalities are established on various islands of the Group and are allotted areas of control. The executive must in all cases reach joint agreement in decisions affecting the administration of the Condominium. The principal Condominium Judicial body is the Joint Court which is composed of a British and a French Judge with a president of neutral nationality. The joint services include finance, posts and telegraphs, customs, public health, lands registry, and public works.

The Convention of 1906 has been superseded by the Convention of 6th August, 1914, which was ratified in 1922.

The British and French Resident Commissioners are subordinate to their respective British and French High Commissioners. The British High Commissioner is stationed at Suva, and the French High Commissioner at Noumea.

III.—POPULATION.

The population of the New Hebrides is composed of some forty to sixty thousand natives, and 2,301 non-natives. A statement is appended giving details of the non-native population.

Description.	*British.*			*French.*			*Totals.*
	Adult Males.	*Females and Children.*	*Total.*	*Adult Males.*	*Females and Children.*	*Total.*	
Nationals	123	79	202	282	449	731	933
Foreigners opted under Protocol ...	10	4	14	32	—	32	46
Asiatics opted under Protocol	52	2	54	86	—	86	140
Protected subjects and citizens :—							
Tonkinese ...	—	—	—	970	211	1,181	1,181
Javanese ...	—	—	—	1	—	1	1
	185	85	270	1,371	660	2,031	2,301

Of the European population, some 300 French and 60 British reside on the island of Efate mainly in and around the town of Vila. Santo is the next important centre and carries about 38 British and 150 French. The balance is distributed throughout the Group. The European population of the Southern part of the Group is entirely British, amounting to 30 persons; of this number 25 reside on the island of Tanna.

The Chinese and Japanese community number 106 and 34 respectively and are centred in and around the town of Vila.

The primitive state of the New Hebrides precludes the taking of any reliable census of the indigenous population. In certain islands which have been under missionary influence for a number of years, it is possible to make a fairly accurate estimate of the inhabitants, but in the more uncivilized islands such as Malekula, Pentecost, and Santo, whose interiors are almost a closed book, it is not possible to form more than a rough estimate of their numbers.

Malekula is credited with the largest population, some 9,000 natives. Next come Santo and Pentecost, about 7,000 each; Tanna, 6,500; Aoba, 6,000; Ambrym 4,000; Epi, 2,500; and Efate, 2,000. Among the smaller islands whose population is worthy of note may be cited Paama with just over 2,000, and Tongoa with 1,300 inhabitants.

In general the native population of the Group is on the decline, but in recent years the islands of Tanna, Paama, and Tongoa have shown a slight tendency to an increase. In this connexion it is interesting to note that the natives of these islands appear to be endowed with a keener commercial acumen than their fellows, which, entailing a necessarily increased activity, may have some bearing on their present immunity from decline.

IV.—HEALTH.

The following is a report on the health of the Group by the Chief Condominium Medical Officer:—

" L'état sanitaire a été satisfaisant au cours de l'année 1934. A part quelques cas de grippe banale et de dysenterie (probablement amoebienne) il n'y a pas eu de véritable épidémie aux Hébrides en 1934.

" Ce qui domine dans toutes les fles de notre Archipel, c'est le Paludisme qui sévit à certaines époques de l'année principalement au moment des changements de saisons, sous une forme assez sérieuse.

" A Vaté et dans les fles du Groupe du Nord 37 per cent. des consultants sont des paludéens secondaires tandis que dans le Groupe du Sud le chiffre correspondant est à environ 7 per cent.

" Après le Paludisme ce sont les consultants pour ulcères et pian qui donnet le plus gros pourcentage, 25 per cent. environ.

"Quelques cas de lèpre ont été signalés dans les Iles du Sud et du Nord. Il est prévu pour l'année 1935 la création d'une léproserie pour le Groupe du Nord dans l'île d'Aoré sur le terrain mis gracieusement à la disposition du Condominium par la Mission Catholique. Une léproserie pour le Groupe du Sud a été aménagée à Tanna fin 1934. Dans ces deux léproseries le traitement des lépreux par la nouvelle méthode au bleu de méthylène sera mise en oeuvre et permettra d'obtenir, si l'on en juge par ce que cette méthode a donné en maints endroits, des résultats encourageants. Elle permettra surtout par le blanchiment rapide des lépreux qui s'y feront traiter et par la propagande faite par ces malades eux-mêmes d'amener volontairement un traitement tous les lépreux qui n'ont pas encore été dépistés par le Service de Santé."

Medical Institutions.

There are eight European doctors, four hospitals, and five medical aid posts in the Group. The location of the hospitals and aid posts is as follows :—

Southern Islands.

Tanna.—A well-equipped hospital run by the Presbyterian Mission, assisted by a grant from British funds. A British medical practitioner is in charge of the hospital. There is also a small French hospital in charge of an officer of the French Medical Service. A leper segregation area was started on Tanna during the year under the auspices of the Condominium Government and treatment is given.

Central Islands.

Efate.—There are two good hospitals at Vila; the John G. Paton Memorial Hospital, administered by the Presbyterian Mission and assisted by a grant from British funds, and the French Government Hospital. These hospitals have trained European staffs and are in the charge of qualified medical officers. The French Government has recently erected a new non-European wing at the French hospital.

Epi.—There is a medical aid post on this island, and an European doctor ministers to the medical welfare of the population.

Malekula.—There is a French Government hospital at Norsup, and a European Medical officer is in charge. At Port Sandwich there is a French Government medical aid post.

Northern Islands.

Santo.—The French Government have established a hospital in the Segond Channel, Santo, with a European medical officer in charge.

There are three medical aid posts belonging to the Melanesian Mission, and assisted by a grant from British funds, on Pentecost, Aoba and Vanua Lava.

All these institutions are open to the indigenous population as well as to white residents and Asiatics.

The following gives statistics of the New Hebrides hospitals for the year 1934 :—

Cases.	*British Hospital Vila.*		*French Hospitals (amalgamated.)*		*Total.*
	European.	*Natives and Asiatics.*	*European.*	*Natives and Asiatics.*	
In-patients ...	11	147	179	996	1,333
Out-patients ...	7	376	1,044	11,659	13,086
Total ...	18	523	1,223	12,655	14,419
Deaths ...	—	6	8	58	72

Diseases.

Malaria is the principal disease. It is more prevalent in the northern islands than the southern, owing to the difference in climate and rainfall, and the prevalence of large swampy areas. Amoebic dysentery is endemic throughout the year and epidemic in the hot season. Both these diseases are being combated with success by measures of sanitation. Blackwater fever occurs occasionally among Europeans. The indigenous population suffers chiefly from yaws, hookworm, malaria, and dysentery. The various hospitals in the group, both Government and Missionary, treat the natives for these complaints.

Sanitation.

Sanitation in the islands of the Group is still in the early stages of development but some progress has been made at Vila, the capital, during the past few years. The water-supply is rain-water collected into large tanks with which all houses are equipped. This system has the disadvantage of providing breeding places for mosquitoes unless adequately protected or periodically treated with kerosene oil. On the other hand, it provides a pure source of supply, and cases of water contamination are rare.

All Government houses in Vila are supplied with septic tanks which prove satisfactory, but most residents adopt the pit system of latrine.

Refuse is disposed of under Condominium arrangements and destroyed by incineration.

Sanitary legislation provides for the inspection of all meat tendered for human consumption in Vila, and for the inspection of private and public premises. A Government quarantine station has been established on the north side of the entrance to Vila Harbour.

Periodical inspections of the town of Vila are undertaken by the Sanitary Commission, and a permanent refuse removal squad is responsible for the removal every day of kitchen refuse, etc., and for the cleanliness of the public roads.

V.—HOUSING.

Houses occupied by Europeans in the Group are usually of the one-storey bungalow type of two or more rooms surrounded by verandahs. They are generally constructed of wood and galvanized iron. Owing to the frequency of earthquake shocks buildings of brick, stone, or concrete are not favoured.

In the more civilized areas natives are gradually adapting themselves to European ideas of constructions, and a marked improvement in native dwelling houses is noticeable in villages adjacent to Vila.

In the outlying islands, mission natives favour dwelling houses constructed of lime mortar, which is a great improvement on the grass humpy of former days, and far more comfortable and sanitary.

The non-mission or heathen native still clings to the insanitary grass or leaf shelter accommodating the whole of his family, and more often than not his pigs and dogs. But with the gradual advance of civilization this system is discarded in favour of the more substantial dwellings above mentioned.

The building of houses, etc., in the town of Vila is governed by the provisions of a Town Conservancy Regulation which requires all plans of projected buildings to be passed by a Sanitary Commission.

Under the provisions of the same Regulation, householders are bound to keep their premises in good order, clean, and free of weeds and undergrowth.

VI.—PRODUCTION.

The chief products of the Group in their order of importance are copra, cocoa, coffee, trochas, sandalwood and cotton. Copra is the most important item, although the value of the crop for 1934 amounted to only £24,600. The value of cocoa produced was £32,250, coffee £15,920, trochas £4,910, sandalwood £2,391 and cotton £507. Local consumption of these products is negligible owing to the lack of demand, the whole crop being exported. The price of cotton having been unprofitable, production has fallen almost to the point of extinction, whereas the increased price of trochas stimulated production.

In addition to the main items of produce mentioned above, small quantities of maize and wool are produced and exported.

A small sheep station running some 2,000 to 2,500 sheep has been in successful operation on the island of Erromanga for some years. Good prices are realized for the wool.

Cattle raising in the Group is not resorted to as an industry. Cattle thrive well and are bred on a small scale generally throughout the Group, principally on account of their food value and their usefulness in keeping plantations free from grass and undergrowth, thus permitting a considerable economy in plantation hands which would otherwise be required for this purpose.

With the exception of copra, of which about one-sixth is produced by native owners of small plots of coconut trees, the products above-mentioned are grown entirely on European-owned plantations, some of them the property of individual owners, others owned by companies such as the Société Française des Nouvelles-Hébrides, and Société Cottonière, which have large interests in the Group.

Plantations owned by British settlers are worked with indigenous labourers partly under contract and partly as free and casual labourers. French settlers employ the same class of labour to a large extent, but they are mainly dependent on Tonkinese coolies imported for French settlers by the French authorities.

The proportion of casual or non-contract native labourers as compared with natives employed under contract by British settlers is about 2 to 1, and by French settlers, about 4 to 1.

At the end of 1934 there were 1,181 Tonkinese coolies and 1 Javanese in the Group under contract to French settlers.

The maximum period of contract for indigenous labourers is three years, but with the growing popularity of the casual labour system, these lengthy terms are becoming more and more rare; the native prefers short contracts or, if possible, no contract at all. The usual term of contract for imported Tonkinese coolies is five years.

All native labour is subject to the control of the Administration. Conditions of employment are governed by the labour provisions of the Proctocol of 1914. In addition, British settlers are subject to the provisions of separate legislation containing additional restrictions to those provided in the Proctocol.

No mining, fishing, or manufacturing industries exist in the Group.

About a score of Tonkinese and Chinese own market gardens in the neighbourhood of the town of Vila, whose produce is all consumed locally; apart from these there are no cultivations, plantations, or industries worked or owned by persons of non-European descent.

VII.—COMMERCE.

The New Hebrides soil and climate are excellent for the culture of all tropical products. Planters have so far specialized in copra, cocoa, coffee and cotton. Unfortunately, owing to the lack of scientific methods of preparation and of a system of standardization, these products are very irregular in quality and owing to their indifferent reputation receive a comparatively low price.

Copra prices showed a further decline during 1934, as did cocoa prices. Other prices were maintained or improved, particularly those of trochas and wool.

Other products exported were burghaus shell, sandalwood, maize, hides and bêche-de-mer.

Hides are a by-product and not an industry. The quantity of bêche-de-mer produced is small and merely a by-product of Japanese and Chinese trochase fishers. Pearl shell is occasionally found, but only in small quantities. Wool is grown successfully on one of the southern islands but sheep do not flourish in the northern part of the Group.

There are many good trees such as kauri, island teak, sandalwood, as well as a variety of other hardwoods, but as yet these have been little exploited owing to economic and topographical difficulties.

Oranges, lemons, limes, grapefruit, bananas, pine-apples, mangoes and avocada pears, etc., grow in profusion, but none are exported owing to the difficulty of finding markets.

It is believed that the New Hebrides are rich in mineral wealth. Exploitation has been delayed owing to land tenure difficulties. Coal and sulphur are known to exist.

Large tracts of fertile land are still untouched awaiting more favourable times and security of tenure.

Exports.

COMPARATIVE TABLE.

	1928.	1929.	1930.	1931.	1932.	1933.	1934.	
	Tons.	*Tons.*	*Tons.*	*Tons.*	*Tons.*	*Tons.*	*Tons.*	*Value.* £ (*approx*)
Copra	12,682	10,787	11,883	10,005	7,032	7,045	6,939	24,600
Cocoa	1,422	2,047	2,265	1,505	1,728	1,893	1,728	32,250
Cotton	551	329	480	387	189	62	19	507
Coffee	96	100	125	131	213	433	318	15,920
Trochas and Burghaus shell	61	57	55	102	112	110	130	4,910
Maize	303	482	455	52	99	35	43	345
Sandalwood ...	54	49	98	24	69	61	100	2,391
Wool	22	8	16	9	4	9	8·5	729
Cotton seed ...	1,198	657	476	1,063	411	128	—	—
Hides	—	—	—	22	17	21	28	451
Castor oil seed ...	—	—	—	21	4	52	29	119
Coconuts	—	—	—	61	107	79	94	220
Bêche-de-mer ...	—	—	—	9	1	18	2·5	64
Miscellaneous ...	336	643	607	276	28	97	200	34
Totals ...	16,725	15,159	16,460	13,667	10,014	10,043	9,587	82,540

PRICES OF RAW PRODUCE IN 1934.

(Expressed in Pounds Sterling per metric ton.)

	£ (approx.)
Copra	3·55
Coffee	52·80
Cocoa	18·65
Cotton	29·70
Maize	8·25
Trochas	46·20
Burghaus	9·90
Wool	112·20

The sum total of exports by weight in 1934 was little less than in 1933, but the value dropped appreciably. Copra prices reached a record low level and undoubtedly reacted on production, though the effect of the French copra preference tax should assist in remedying matters. The cultivation of cotton has almost ceased. Cocoa was a bad market, but production did not suffer to any great extent. Coffee and trochas were the most profitable products.

The share of produce exported by British firms and planters was 18 per cent. by tonnage and 11 per cent. by value.

Imports.

The value of Imports in 1934 amounted to £90,888, and show a decrease as compared with those for 1933. The reduction is partly due to the general poverty of the group and partly due to the fall in prices.

The exchange continued to assist imports from British sources, particularly from Australia whose share increased to 62 per cent. of the New Hebrides import trade. The chief articles so imported are flour, beer, fine and "trade" cigarettes and tobacco, tinned meats and fish, potatoes, butter, onions, tinned milk, biscuits, haberdashery, millinery, and clothing. Some of these articles formerly came almost exclusively from France. Imports of certain textiles and cheap articles from Japan are on the increase.

The principal importing firms are (British) Messrs. Burns, Philp (South Sea) Company, Limited, (French) Les Comptoirs Français des Nouvelles-Hébrides, Messrs. Gubbay Frères, and La Compagnie Française des Iles du Pacifique.

Three steamers are employed in the inter-island trade. Two of these (one British and one French) carry trade rooms, where the settler is able to purchase most of his requirements and is able to dispose of his produce. The third vessel (French) confines itself to the freighting of cargo and the carriage of passengers. In addition there are a number of small trading craft operating chiefly among natives, some of which are native owned.

There are three large stores in Vila, one of which is British. In addition there are numerous small shops in the hands of French, Japanese and Chinese traders. There are two stores at Segond Channel, Santo, both French.

During the year under review the small European trader continued to pass through an extremely difficult period. The price of copra became so low as to render native trade almost impossible. He has been forced in an attempt to stimulate his turnover to buy copra at a dangerously small margin and also to reduce his profit on trade goods to the lowest possible limit. Native trading seems to be on the increase and is growing at the expense of the white trader. The native trader, owing to his lower standard of living, can usually undersell the European.

VIII.—WAGES AND COST OF LIVING.

Labour and Wages.

NATIVE LABOUR.

Native labour may be divided into three main classes:—

(*a*) plantation labour, boats' crews of local small vessels, employees of traders, Government messengers, Constabulary, etc., on contract and otherwise;

(*b*) Domestic labour;

(*c*) casual labour, working on steamers, wharves, Government works, etc.

The supply of native labour during the year was equal to the demand. The tendency to employ "free labour" (not under contract) is increasing except in the case of certain plantations which have difficulty in obtaining labour near at hand. The growth of a "free" labour market is a satisfactory feature as it has a tendency to bring the wages and treatment of labour into more exact relationship with prices. It is doubtful, however, if certain plantations would ever be able to be run without a few contracted men at least to ensure the proper harvesting of certain seasonal crops.

In consequence of the gradual disappearance of Tonkinese, French employers have been recruiting natives freely.

The native's aversion to long term engagements is as pronounced as ever; he prefers to work without engagement if possible and will not usually bind himself for more than twelve months.

By nature the native of the New Hebrides is lazy and of mercurial temperament. He will not work unless circumstances compel him. His wants are less simple than formerly as he has become accustomed to European food and clothing. When times are good labour is exceedingly scarce and dear, as the majority of natives can

obtain all they want by the sale of the produce of their lands, and with a minimum of exertion. When times are bad, like the present, the point arrives when the native, having exhausted his hoarded savings, cannot, without a very great deal of exertion himself, obtain the luxuries he desires. He is then faced with the choice of work on his own account, which is unpalatable, or, on the other hand, with either reverting to his natural state in the matter of food (of which there is plenty) and clothing, or working for wages. This stage was reached during the course of 1931. Since then employers have found no difficulty in obtaining labour and the production of native-made copra has fallen off to a very considerable extent. Conversely traders have found it difficult to obtain a living there being no money to buy their wares.

Domestic labour remains by comparison difficult to secure, as neither the male nor female native takes kindly to this form of service and can rarely be prevailed upon to stay with an employer for an extended period. For this reason the New Hebridean servant is not efficient, and can rarely be trained to the finer domestic arts.

Wages of most classes of native labour have now undergone considerable reduction, but not in ratio to the depression of prices.

During the year the current rates of wages were :—

Class (*a*)—

Plantation labourers ... Boats' crews ... ... Traders' employees ...	10s. to £1 10s. 0d. per month with food and clothing, whether under engagement or not, generally together with piece-work.
Government messengers ...	£3 per month without food.
Constabulary	From £2 per month with food and clothing.

Note.—Local or casual labour is frequently employed on plantations for picking cotton and seasonal crops on a daily wage from 1s. to 2s. with or without food, according to arrangement.

Class (*b*)—

Domestic labour	£1 to £2 per month with food and clothing, whether under engagement or not.

Class (*c*)—

Casual labour, other than plantation.	2s. to 4s. per day with or without food and according to skill.

The employment of natives under engagement of any kind is governed by the provisions of the Protocol of 1914, and, in the case of British dependants, also by national legislation.

Asiatic Labour.

Asiatic labour consists of :—

(*a*) Indo-Chinese coolies imported under contract for the use of French settlers by the French Government. These Tonkinese are, generally speaking, satisfactory, being of a superior intelligence to the natives, if not so physically strong, and are naturally hard workers. They receive approximately 100 francs per month per head, plus food, clothing, lodging, etc. The cost to the settler is now considerably higher than that of the native labourer as, in addition to wages, he is charged for the cost of transportation to and from Indo-China, Government inspection, and medical surveillance, etc. Owing to the depression a large number have been repatriated. There remained at the end of the year 1,181.

(*b*) Free Chinese and Japanese labour of the artisan class. These are only a handful and work on daily wages which are unfixed and depend partly on skill and partly on demand. Such wages vary from 10s. to 15s. *per diem*. There are also a few Chinese employed as stewards, cooks, and firemen, on inter-island steamers at rates varying from £3 to £6 per month with rations.

Cost of Living.

The maintenance of a good standard of living among European residents is an important factor for the preservation of health and an equitable mental outlook and it is desirable that it should be as high as circumstances permit. The general standard of European living is good. At Vila, the capital of the Group, living is more expensive than in other parts as facilities for maintaining vegetable gardens and live stock are less. Market gardening is carried out by the Chinese community and by a few natives, and under normal conditions green vegetables can be obtained during seven to eight months of the year. The supply is generally unreliable being at times in excess of local requirements and at other times the reverse. Fresh meat of fair quality is obtainable from the local butchers and arrangements for supplies of fresh milk can usually be made. Fish is difficult to obtain and the quality is tropical. The stores maintain supplies of clothing, hosiery, boots, etc., but it is more desirable for wearing apparel to be obtained from Australia or Europe. Nearly all perishable food commodities are imported from Australia with the exception of rice and sugar, of which a proportion is imported from Indo-China and Java.

The cost of living in the islands of the Group away from Vila is cheaper and generally more satisfactory ; all European residents are able to maintain vegetable gardens and live stock and thus provide themselves with eggs, milk, butter, poultry and meat. The periodical visits of the island vessel supply them with such other commodities as they require.

The following table gives the average retail prices in the town of Vila during 1934:—

Fresh milk	8d. to 10d. per quart.
Flour	2d. to 2½d. per lb.
Rice	1½ to 3d. per lb.
Sugar	2½d. to 5d. per lb.
Potatoes	2d. to 3d. per lb.
Fresh meat	10d. to 2s. per lb.
Onions	3d. per lb.
Butter	1s. 6d. to 2s. per lb.
Tea	3s. to 3s. 6d. per lb.
Coffee (local)	1s. 6d. per lb
Eggs...	2s. 6d. to 5s. per dozen.
Poultry	3s. to .s. each.
Tinned Meat	1s. to 2s. per lb.
Wood fuel	5s. 6d. to 11s. per cubic metre.
Kerosene	7s. 6d. to 8s. 6d. per tin (4 gallons).
Petrol	7s. 6d. to 8s. 6d. per tin (4 gallons).

IX.—EDUCATION AND WELFARE INSTITUTIONS.

There are no schools controlled or supported by the Condominium Government, nor are there any facilities for European children to receive anything but a primary education, which is not of a very high standard.

The town of Vila has three schools: (1) a school for girls, supported and controlled by the Sisters of the Sacred Heart Mission; (2) a boys' school, supported and controlled by the Marist Mission; and (3) an infants' school run by the French Government. Admission to these schools is not restricted to the children of Europeans and the entrance fees are purely nominal.

The British and French Missions in the Group have various good schools and training institutions for the benefit of the natives. The Presbyterian Mission maintains an excellent school at Tangoa, South Santo, and can accommodate up to sixty pupils. They also maintain other schools throughout the Group. The Melanesian Mission have a good school at Lolowai, Aoba, and schools in the Banks Group. The Seventh Day Adventist Mission have a utilitarian school at Aore Island, Santo, which is equipped with modern machinery for teaching all kinds of woodcraft. The Marist Mission also maintains schools in various islands of the Group.

All these institutions carry out excellent work among the natives and deserve commendation.

The task of educating the New Hebridean has been left in the hands of the various mission bodies operating in the Group; but in order to appreciate the inestimable services rendered by these missions in educating and civilizing the wild inhabitants of these islands, a short sketch of missionary endeavour will be of assistance.

The island of Erromanga was the scene of the first essay to wean the native from heathenism, when in the year 1839 John Williams and Harris, under the auspices of the London Missionary Society, landed at Dillons Bay, and in the same year were killed by the natives in whose welfare they strove.

It was not until 1857 that any further attempt was made to bring civilization to the Erromangans. In that year the Reverend G. N. and Mrs. Gordon took up the work, but were subsequently murdered by the natives, to be followed by Gordon's brother, who perished in the same manner. The Gordons were followed by Mr. and Mrs. McNair. Mr. McNair died on the island and was followed by the Reverend Doctor Robertson, who, after many years of danger and hardship had the satisfaction of seeing the whole island under the civilizing influence of Christianity when he left the Group in 1920.

Erromanga is well named " The Martyr's Isle ".

In 1842 an endeavour was made by Messrs. Turner and Nisbet to convert the Tannese, but their efforts were not attended with success, and after a few months they were forced to flee, barely escaping with their lives. Sixteen years later the Reverend Doctor J. G. Paton took up the work on Tanna but, owing to the hostility of the natives, was compelled to abandon the island after four years. He settled on the adjacent island of Aniwa, where his efforts were attended with every success. Tanna was afterwards occupied by the Reverends Watt and Neilson, whose work materially contributed to the subjugation of the warlike Tannese.

About the year 1850 the control of the missions passed into the charge of the various Presbyterian Church Bodies in the Colonies, and in later years the more northern islands of the Group were endowed with missionaries. The following names figure prominently in the list of those devoted men and women who in the early days braved the hardships and dangers of this Group in the task of claiming its inhabitants for civilization: the Reverend Milne of Nguna; Doctors Mackenzie and Macdonald of Efate; Michelsen of Tongoa; Smail and Fraser of Epi; Morton and Watt-Leggatt of Malekula; Annand and Mackenzie of Santo.

Other workers in the New Hebrides mission-field include the Catholic, Melanesian, Church of Christ, and Seventh Day Adventist denominations.

The Catholic Mission was first established on the island of Aneityum in the year 1848, but their stay was not of long duration and the attempt was soon abandoned. They returned to the Group however in 1887, and since that date their influence has gradually extended to the whole Group with the exception of the southern islands, and the Banks and Torres. The year 1933, however, saw the establishment by the Marist Mission of a post on the island of Tanna in the southern portion of the Group.

The Melanesian Mission was in the field about the year 1850, and by agreement with the Presbyterian Missions the northern part of the Group, comprising Aoba, Pentecost, Maeovo, and the Banks and Torres, as yet untouched by the Presbyterians, was abandoned as a Melanesian Mission sphere of influence.

It was on Aoba Island in the year 1905 that the Reverend Godden of this Mission, the latest of mission martyrs at native hands, was brutally murdered by a native of that island.

In 1912 the Seventh Day Adventists started operations on Efate, but later transferred their activities to Ambrym, Malekula, and Santo, and in 1932 to Tanna.

In the task of civilizing the native the importance of education was never lost sight of. Each mission village had its school, where the rudiments of reading and writing were imparted to young and old. To-day there are four good central schools, in addition to the mission station schools, where facilities are provided for primary education of the native. Of these the Training Institution established many years ago by the Presbyterian Mission at Tangoa renders excellent services in fashioning from, the raw material, teachers in whose care is confided the task of education. Another invaluable institution of this nature is the Melanesian Mission school on Aoba. The Catholic Mission school at Vila also renders good services in this direction. The year 1925 saw the Seventh Day Adventists installed on the island of Aore, where natives from all parts of the Group, in addition to their scholastic studies, receive practical instruction in various arts and crafts.

Apart from the good educational work achieved by the missions, there is the equally important and beneficial medical work undertaken by the Presbyterian Mission, about which much could be written. A few years ago this denomination maintained no less than four well-equipped hospitals in the Group. To-day there are two, one at Tanna and the other at Vila. These hospitals are primarily intended for native patients, but their services are no less appreciated by white sufferers. The hospital established at Dip Point, Ambrym, under the superintendence of Doctor Bowie, to whose skill and kindness, not only hundreds of natives but many Europeans alive to-day owe their lives, will always be remembered in connection with missionary endeavour in this Group. This hospital, in the year 1913, was engulfed, together with the adjoining mission station and native villages, in the tremendous volcanic outburst on that island, and to-day, where the hospital stood, is nothing but a shallow lake.

The Mission hospital at Vila was opened in 1912, and is a well-appointed building standing on the small island of Iririki in Vila Harbour.

Tanna hospital has been in existence over 25 years and its beneficial services are well known and appreciated by all.

X.—COMMUNICATIONS AND TRANSPORT.

Shipping.

Europe.—A two-monthly service of the Messageries Maritimes line is maintained between the terminal points of Dunkirk and Noumea (New Caledonia), via Vila, on both inward and outward voyages. The route is via Tahiti, Panama, Martinique, and Marseilles, and the period of the voyage approximately 60 days between Vila and Marseilles. The following vessels are engaged in this service :—*Ville de Verdun*, *Ville de Strasbourg*, and *Ville d'Amiens*.

Australia.—The s.s. *Morinda* (Burns Philp Line) and the s.s. *Laperouse* (Messageries Maritimes) maintain respectively six-weekly and periodical communciations with Sydney, New South Wales, the former via Norfolk Island and Lord Howe Island on the outward and homeward voyages from Sydney, and the latter via Lifou, Loyalty Islands, and Noumea, New Caledonia. The s.s. *Laperouse* also maintains a service with Indo-China and Hong Kong.

Dutch Line.—A regular service is also maintained by the Royal Packet Navigation Company's steamer *Van Rees* between Saigon and Noumea and Sydney, touching at Vila about every two months via Batavia, Papua and New Guinea.

New Caledonia.—Periodical communication is maintained with Noumea by the s.s. *Laperouse*, and by the Messageries Maritimes line of steamers previously mentioned, approximately every two months. The French inter-island steamers also pay occasional visits to Noumea.

Inter-Island.—The following steamers make periodical voyages round the Group. They have no fixed itinerary but usually connect at Vila with the French or British mail vessels :—

s.s. *Makambo* (Burns Philp (South Sea) Company), s.s. *Bucephale* (Messageries Maritimes), and s.s. *Perrenche* (privately owned).

The port of Vila is the port of entry in the Group. The tonnage entered and cleared during 1934 was as follows :—

ENTERED.

	Tons.	
British	32,908	(14 vessels)
French	90,145	(31 vessels)
Other	20,771	(12 vessels)
	143,824	(57 vessels)

CLEARED.

	Tons.	
British	32,896	(13 vessels)
French	90,145	(31 vessels)
Other	20,771	(12 vessels)
	143,812	(56 vessels)

Ports.

Vessels of any size can enter the Port of Vila but the number of anchorages for large vessels is limited. All loading and discharging is carried out in lighters as the wharves and jetties at Vila are not suitable for vessels exceeding 100 tons.

Railways.

There are no railways in the Group. A two-foot trolley rail track runs from the outskirts of Mélé to Vila—a distance of about four miles—and is used for various commercial purposes. The small wharves, privately-owned by the commercial houses in Vila, are also provided with rails for the transport on trolleys of merchandise and produce to and from the bulk store sheds.

Posts.

Mail communication from and to Europe and Australia is maintained by the mail steamers s.s. " Morinda " every six weeks, and s.s. " Laperouse " periodically, both of which call at Vila and various island ports. These lines are subsidized by His Majesty's Government in the Commonwealth of Australia and the French Government, respectively. The mails, both inward and outward, are sorted at Vila and re-bagged for distribution round the Group by the inter-island steamers, which receive a grant from the Condominium Government for the services performed. The average time for European postal matter to reach Vila by the regular mail routes is 42 to 49 days. The Condominium Government has a postage stamp issue designed to represent the dual control. There are two sets of stamps—one British and one French. Both are inscribed in English and French currency.

The Condominium, during 1934, entered into the new Australian-European air mail scheme.

The postal matter handled by the Vila Post Office for 1934 was as follows :—

	From or to British territory.		*From or to French territory.*		*From or to other places.*		*Total.*
	Received.	*Despatched.*	*Received.*	*Despatched.*	*Received.*	*Despatched.*	
Letters	24,000	19,000	50,000	37,000	3,000	2,000	135,000
Other articles ...	46,000	2,000	30,000	4,000	500	500	83,000
Registered articles	600	1,600	2,900	3,100	100	200	8,500
Totals ...	70,600	22,600	82,900	44,100	3,600	2,700	226,500

RADIO-TELEGRAPH.

Communication with the New Hebrides is by radio-telegraph. The Condominium Government maintains a station at Vila. The Station is powered by 1½ kilowatts and call sign is F J X. Reception and transmission are carried out on wave lengths of 17 to 40 metres and 21 to 37 metres respectively and also on the 600 and 800 metre bands. A daily service is maintained with the station at Suva, Fiji (V P D and V R P) and with the French Government station at Noumea, New Caledonia (F J P). Severe static interferes with the service on the intermediate bands during the hot and rainy season from November to April. The terminal charge of the Vila Station is 3d. per word (minimum charge 1s. 6d.). The rate per word for telegrams despatched from Vila to Australia and the United Kingdom is as follows:—

To	*Ordinary.*	*Code.*	*Deferred.*	*D.L.T.*	*X.L.T.*
Australia ...	1s.	8d.	—	—	8d.
United Kingdom	2s. 2d.	1s. 4d.	1s. 1d.	9d. (Minimum charge of 25 words).	9d. (Minimum charge of 10 words).

The traffic handled by the Station during the year under report was as follows:—

Class.	*Words received.*	*Words despatched.*
Official	22,979	33,525
„ Relayed	56	—
Ordinary Private	6,217	4,186
„ Relayed	2,953	—
Code	8,776	11,665
„ Relayed	4,875	—
L.C.	596	708
„ Relayed	519	—
D.L.T.	432	268
„ Relayed	246	—
X.L.T.	76	105
„ Relayed	75	—
Total	47,800	50,457

Total words received and despatched = 98,257.

Roads.

With the exception of the islands of Efate, Tanna, and Tongoa, there are very few public highways in the Group suitable for wheeled transport. Tanna has several good roads, one of which traverses the island. There is also a fair road on the island of Tongoa. Vila, the capital and seat of Government, has several roads and these link up with the outlying districts.

Telephones.

Telephone communication is established in the town of Vila and the outlying districts. The system is operated by a central exchange and the service is continuous. There are 52 telephones and 96 miles of wire. During the hurricane season the service is liable to interruption. There are no telephone systems in the other islands of the Group. The annual subscription rate is £1 (unlimited calls).

XI.—BANKING, CURRENCY, AND WEIGHTS AND MEASURES.

There are no banks in the New Hebrides. The Condominium Government carries out its banking operations through Noumea (New Caledonia) and Sydney (Australia). It has been the practice in the past for the larger British and French commercial houses to act as bankers for their clients, but depressed conditions have severely restricted these operations. The Banque de l'Indochine, at Noumea, maintains a local note issue which circulates in the New Hebrides and is guaranteed by the Bank of France.

The currencies circulating in the New Hebrides Group are sterling, Australian and French currency. Australian currency is accepted at the prevailing discount rate against sterling.

Australian currency is used by British residents throughout the Group while sterling is confined mostly to Government transactions. The average local commercial rates of exchange during the year for sterling and Australian money in relation to the franc were: pound sterling = 75 francs, and pound Australian = 62 francs. The British and French systems of weights and measures are both employed throughout the Group.

XII.—PUBLIC WORKS.

The Condominium maintains a Public Works Department normally controlled by a Superintendent and an Assistant. During the year the majority of the Condominium houses and buildings in Vila and elsewhere were put into repair and repainted, while the Efate roads were all repaired, certain small bridges being renewed.

In normal times building material is mostly imported from Australia. Dwelling houses and other buildings are all made of wood and galvanized iron owing to the prevalence of earth tremors.

The construction and maintenance of roads and bridges is carried out partly by the Public Works Department and partly by local contract under Public works supervision. Semi-metalled roads exist in Efate for a few miles round Vila. There are unmetalled or semi-metalled roads in various parts of the Group, the best being

those in the islands of Tanna and Tongoa, which have been made by the natives themselves to facilitate the cartage of produce to the beaches. Such roads are comparatively easy of construction as the underlying hard coral is generally close to the surface and thus cartage material is minimised. The chief difficulty in maintaining roads is the keeping down of bush.

The use of motor vehicles, and in some islands ox-wagons, has increased the importance of road construction. Most plantations now keep motor transport for their own use and maintain very fair motor ways within their own boundaries. These frequently link up with similar roads on adjoining propjerties. In this manner most of the existing public roads (now maintained by the Condominium) have come into being and it is probable that public roads and island arteries of the future will be similarly evolved.

The Public Works Department also maintains the harbour light system of Vila Harbour. This consists of an automatic lighthouse on Pango Point, which guides vessels to the mouth of Vila Harbour, and a pair of leading lights on the hills above the harbour which give a line to the deep water entrance. A green light shows the lateral margin of safety for large ships. Pango lighthouse was rebuilt and the mechanism of the leading lights of Vila Harbour were renewed during the year.

XIII.—JUSTICE, POLICE, AND PRISONS.

Justice.

The Convention of 1914 provided for the immediate introduction of three Courts, namely the Joint Court, and the French and British National Courts, and the subsequent formation of two others —Courts of First Instance and Native Courts.

The scope and functions of these Courts is briefly as follows :—

(1) *Joint Court.*—The Court is composed of a British and a French Judge, with a President of neutral nationality. There is also a Public Prosecutor and a Native Advocate. The Joint Court is a Court of final adjudication in matters of purely Condominium nature. Broadly speaking, and subject to certain exceptions, its civil jurisdiction is confined to certain proceedings in respect of rights over immovable property—its chief function being that of a land Court governing the registration of indefeasible titles to land. It may also settle cases between any parties, native or non-native, brought before it by consent of both. Its criminal jurisdiction, broadly speaking, is confined to offences—(*a*) connected with the recruitment of native labourers, or (*b*) committed by natives against non-natives, or (*c*) committed by natives against natives in areas where the Native Code is in force and involving a penalty of

over one year's confinement, or (*d*) against the Convention, or Joint Regulations passed in pursuance thereof, in areas where no Court of First Instance exists.

There is an appeal to the Joint Court from all judgments of Courts of First Instance and from important civil judgments of Native Courts. The Joint Court also has certain revisionary powers in criminal cases of Native Courts, and judgments of Courts of First Instance involving sentence of imprisonment.

(2) *Courts of First Instance.*—The composition of these Courts consists of a British and a French District Agent with a British or French Assessor chosen by lot. Their jurisdiction is over breaches of the 1914 Convention, or of Joint Regulations made thereunder, except those connected with the recruitment of native labour.

(3) *Native Courts.*—These are composed of either a British or French District Agent, assisted by two native Assessors. The British and French Agents preside over the Courts in turn, month and month about. A necessary corollary to the full and complete functioning of these Courts is the promulgation in the area of the Native Code.

(4) and (5) *National Courts.*—The British and French Governments have established in the Group, in conformity with their existing legal systems, Courts with jurisdiction over all civil cases, other than those reserved to the Joint Court, and over all criminal cases in which a non-native is the defendant. In civil cases the jurisdiction over actions between non-natives belongs in some cases to the Court of the Power under whose law the contract was concluded, or the act or thing in question originated, and in other cases to the Court of the Power to which the defendant belongs. In criminal cases, non-natives are justiciable by the Court of their own nationality or the nationality applied to them.

Courts of First Instance have so far been set up in Central Districts Nos. 1 and 2.

A Code of Native Criminal Law has been instituted and two Native Courts—one in the Central District No. 1 and one in the Southern District—have been formed to administer Penal Law only within their competence and jurisdiction.

Police.

The policing of the Group is carried out by two separate forces of armed native constabulary, British and French, each in the charge of a National Commandant under the orders of the respective Resident Commissioners. The headquarters are at Vila, and small detachments are located at the District Agencies on the islands of Tanna, Malekula, and Santo, respectively, in order to assist the District Agents in the carrying out of their duties.

The British force is composed of natives recruited from the islands of the New Hebrides, and the French force partly of New Hebrideans and Loyalty Islanders. In addition, the French have enrolled a number of Tonkinese police, for the purpose of facilitating police operations among the Tonkinese coolies in the Group.

The duties of the native constabulary consist in the maintenance of law and order among the native population of the more civilized areas, general police and patrol work, the guarding of native prisoners, and the repression of native disorders.

Both the British and French Commandants, in addition to their duties of police officers of the Condominium, also act as police officers in so far as their own nationals are concerned, and are charged with the conduct of police cases before their respective National Courts.

The cost of the maintenance of the two forces is defrayed by the respective national Governments, except when the two corps are acting jointly, when the expenses are met from Condominium funds.

The usual term of enlistment for natives of the Group is two years. Some re-engage for further terms. The civilizing influence of the period spent under discipline combined with the regular food and regular hours of work, is an important factor in the lives of these natives; when they return to their homes they have acquired a certain knowledge of, and respect for, the law and white man's justice which cannot fail to be of assistance to them and their fellow islanders in their everyday life and their relations with Europeans.

Prisons.

Each Government maintains its own national prison, which is situated in the town of Vila, and accommodation is provided for both natives and whites. The cost of maintenance of prisoners sentenced by the national tribunals is met from national funds, and that of natives sentenced by the Resident Commissioners and the Native and Mixed Courts, from Condominium funds.

There is no Condominium prison staff. Each Commandant acts as prison keeper and is responsible for the supervision of prisoners placed in his charge. He is assisted by police constables who act as warders.

In addition to the national prisons at headquarters each District Agency is provided with a temporary lock-up in which natives under short sentences are confined.

The class of native prisoner with which the Administration is called upon to deal is almost exclusively confined to those sentenced for breaches of local liquor laws and offenders against the provisions of the Native Penal Code.

Native prisoners are employed in works of general utility, such as the making and cleaning of roads, weeding Government paddocks, transport of material to various Government buildings, etc.

The daily average of native prisoners confined in the British prison was 5·31 and in the French prison 8·94. No deaths occurred in the British prison. Generally speaking, the health of prisoners was good.

The following judgments, other than civil, were recorded by the various Courts :—

	Nature of Judgment.	
	Fine.	*Imprisonment.*
Joint Court	4*	4*
Courts of First Instance	12	2
Native Courts	25	33
Resident Commissioners' Courts ...	18	42
British National Court	1	1
Totals	60	82

XIV.—LEGISLATION.

The following were the only legislative acts of any importance coming into force during the year :—

(*a*) Joint Regulation No. 8 of 1934, controlling the entry of undesirable immigrants into the New Hebrides, and

(*b*) Joint Regulation No. 9 of 1934, which controls and penalizes public gambling in the Group.

XV.—PUBLIC FINANCE AND TAXATION.

By Article 5 of the Convention of 1914 each of the two Powers is required to defray the expenses of its own Administration in the Group. The cost of the joint services is defrayed out of local taxation. The joint services include finance, posts and telegraphs, customs, public works, ports and harbours, public health, the Joint Court and the Summary Courts and lands registry. In the event of revenue from local taxation proving insufficient to meet jointly approved expenditure, the two Signatory Powers contribute the deficit in equal proportions. Since the year 1921 the Condominium has been self-supporting, but owing to the falling off in revenue, due to the general commercial depression, contributions were required in the years 1931, 1932, 1933 and 1934, from each Government.

* Three judgments of Court of First Instance, Central District No. 1, revised by Joint Court.

Revenue and Expenditure.

CONDOMINIUM REVENUE.

Year.	*French Currency.*		*British Currency.*
	Converted at Fcs. 124 = £1		
	Francs.		*£*
1927	3,037,711	or	24,497
1928	3,463,551	or	27,932
1929	3,549,562	or	28,624
1930	2,402,829	or	19,378
1931	1,592,941	or	12,846
1932	1,242,635	or	10,021
1933	1,379,644	or	11,126
1934	1,329,249	or	10,719

CONDOMINIUM EXPENDITURE.

1927	2,220,479	or	17,907
1928	3,568,404	or	28,777
1929	3,210,639	or	25,892
1930	3,509,011	or	28,298
1931	3,013,698	or	24,304
1932	2,455,448	or	19,802
1933	2,358,346	or	19,019
1934	2,884,240	or	23,362

The chief sources of Condominium revenue are import and export taxes and port dues, which normally account for some four-fifths of the receipts. Other sources of income are postal and telegraphic receipts, Court fees and fines, survey fees, trading licences, taxes on vehicles, lands registry fees, and miscellaneous receipts.

The following is a brief table of the principal import duties current during the year :—

General merchandise, unspecified ...	6 per cent. *ad valorem*.
Gramophones, records, perfumery, lace, rifles, revolvers, and cartridges.	20 ,, ,,
Spirits and tobacco	12 ,, ,,
Wines and petrol, lubricating and combustible oils.	5 ,, ,,
Kerosene	3 ,, ,,
Shotguns and cartridges, detonators	100 ,, ,,
Beer	6d. per gallon.
Dynamite	9d. per lb.
Fuse	2d. per 24 feet.

No duty is levied on the following articles:—live stock, books, cereals and seeds, ship's biscuit, fertilizers, medical appliances and drugs for hospitals, microscopes, plants, vaccines and lymphs, fresh vegetables and fruit.

The main heads of taxation and actual yields for the year 1934 are tabulated as follows:—

	£
Inland Revenue (trading and other licences) ...	541
Post Office	553
Port dues	835
Court and Survey fees	675
Import duties	6,617
Export duties	638
Wireless Telegraph (gross)	786
Lands Registry	10

EXPENDITURE ON SERVICES ENTIRELY BRITISH.

	£
1927-28	16,048
1928-29	11,966
1929-30	9,506
1930-31	10,314
1931-32	9,540
1932-33	9,106
1933-34	8,615

This expenditure is defrayed from funds provided by Parliament on Civil Estimates, Vote for Colonial and Middle Eastern Services, Class II, 9. Certain miscellaneous receipts, such as Court fees and fines, and rent, totalling about a hundred pounds annually, are applied in reduction of the Vote on which expenditure is provided for. The expenditure on British services includes, among other things, the personal emoluments of the British national staff, Police Force, and District Agents, and maintenance of houses of officers and police barracks.

The French Government maintains at national expense services similar to the above.

XVI.—MISCELLANEOUS.

Lands and Survey.

Land owned by settlers in the New Hebrides was acquired originally from native owners, either by purchase or barter. Ownership at the present day is based on these native deeds, but such deeds do not constitute a valid title until judgment has been pronounced upon them by the Joint Court. The procedure in regard to obtaining indefeasible titles to land in the New Hebrides is set out in Articles 22 to 27 of the Protocol of 1914. Approximately 1,000 claims have been lodged in the Joint Court representing an area of 2,150,000 acres, more or less.

The adjudication of land claims on Efate was completed during 1932 and the majority of claims in the Southern Islands similarly dealt with during 1933 and 1934. During 1934 survey of Epi and adjacent islands was commenced.

The speed with which claims have been dealt with has been dependent to a large extent on the progress of land surveys of the properties affected, and of the claims of opposing applicants for title.

A staff of surveyors is attached to the Court, but owing to the difficult nature of the country to be surveyed and identified, progress is necessarily slow. For financial reasons the staff of surveyors has lately been kept at a minimum.

In the adjudication of land claims, due consideration is given to the needs of the indigenous population that may be occupying lands coming up for registration. The Court instructs its surveyors to report on such matters in the course of their work, and is guided by such reports in deciding the desirability or necessity of making native reserves. The Protocol provides for the appointment of an official Native Advocate by the two Governments to watch over native interests in land matters and to bring to the notice of the Court instances of usurpation of land by settlers, as well as to assist them in opposing claims before the Court. The Torrens system of land registration has been adapted to the New Hebrides.

Atmospheric Disturbances.

There were no hurricanes during the year.

General.

Depressed prices and conditions for primary production continued throughout 1934 and the operations of planter, merchant, and trader were further restricted. Prices were improving in the latter part of the year and the outlook was brighter than it had been for some time.

H.M.S. *Diomede*, Captain Cosmo Graham, R.N., visited Vila during July and subsequently made a tour of the Northern Islands of the Group. The R.M.S. *Oronsay* and the T.S.S. *Katoomba* visited the Group in August and April respectively with tourists from Australia.

APPENDIX.

A Select Bibliography of the New Hebrides.

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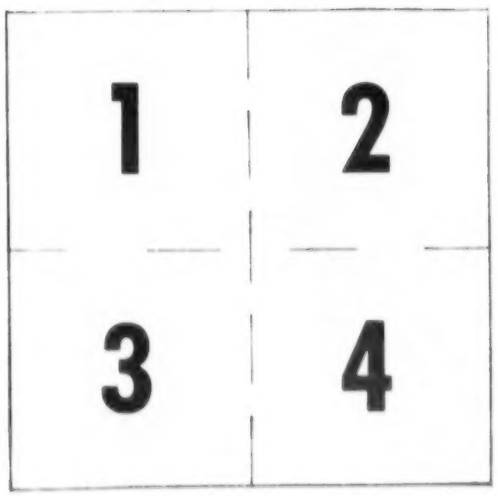
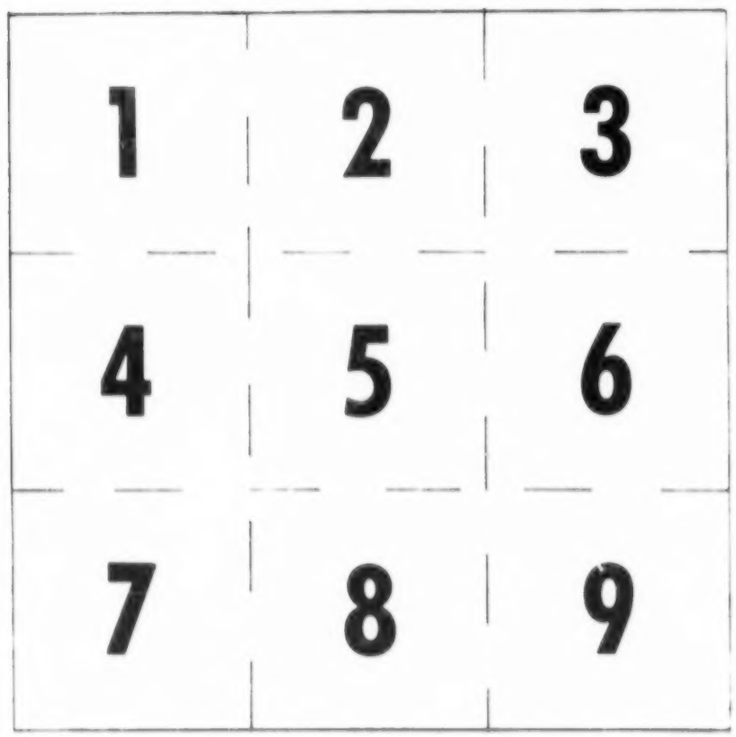
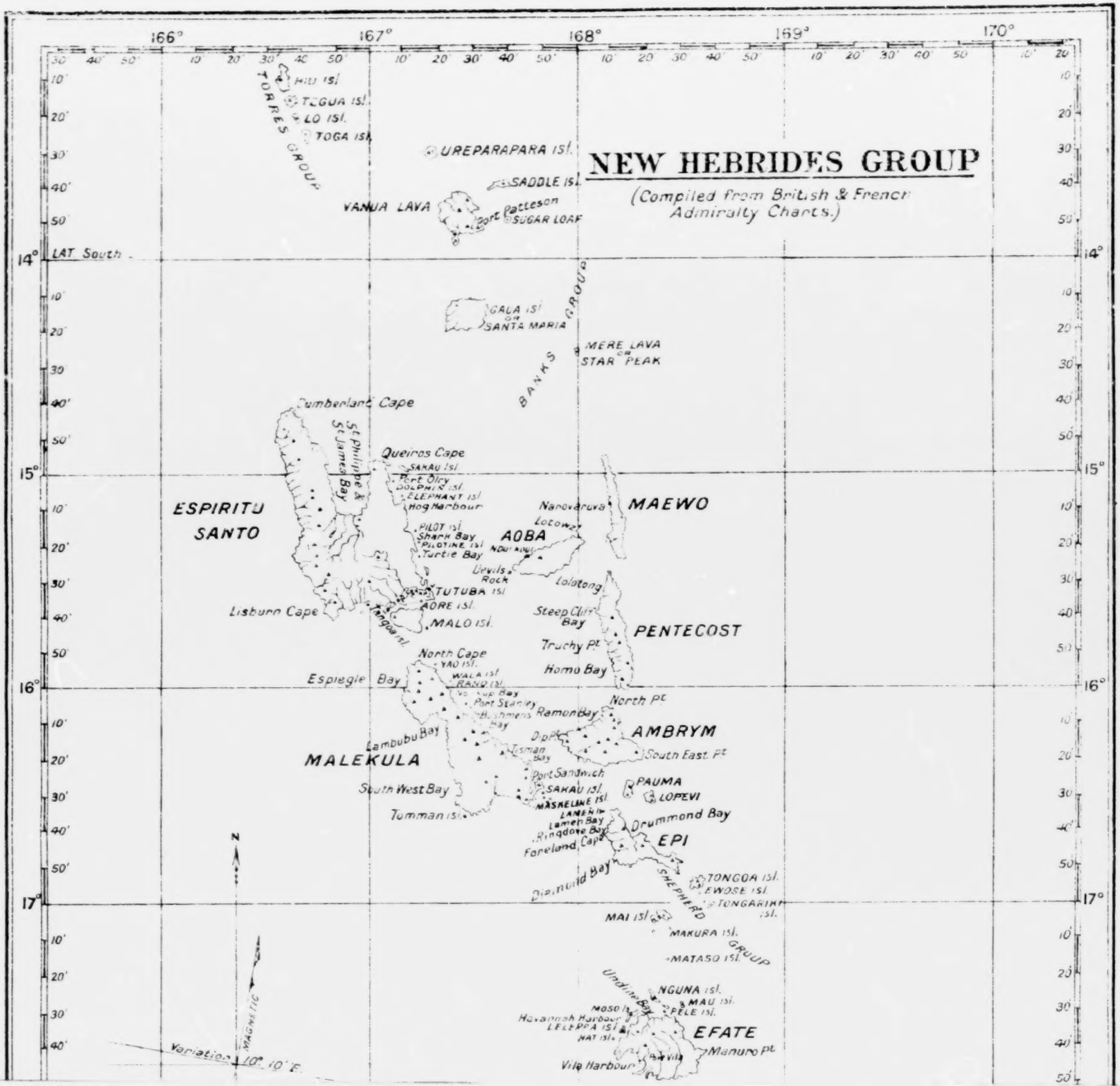
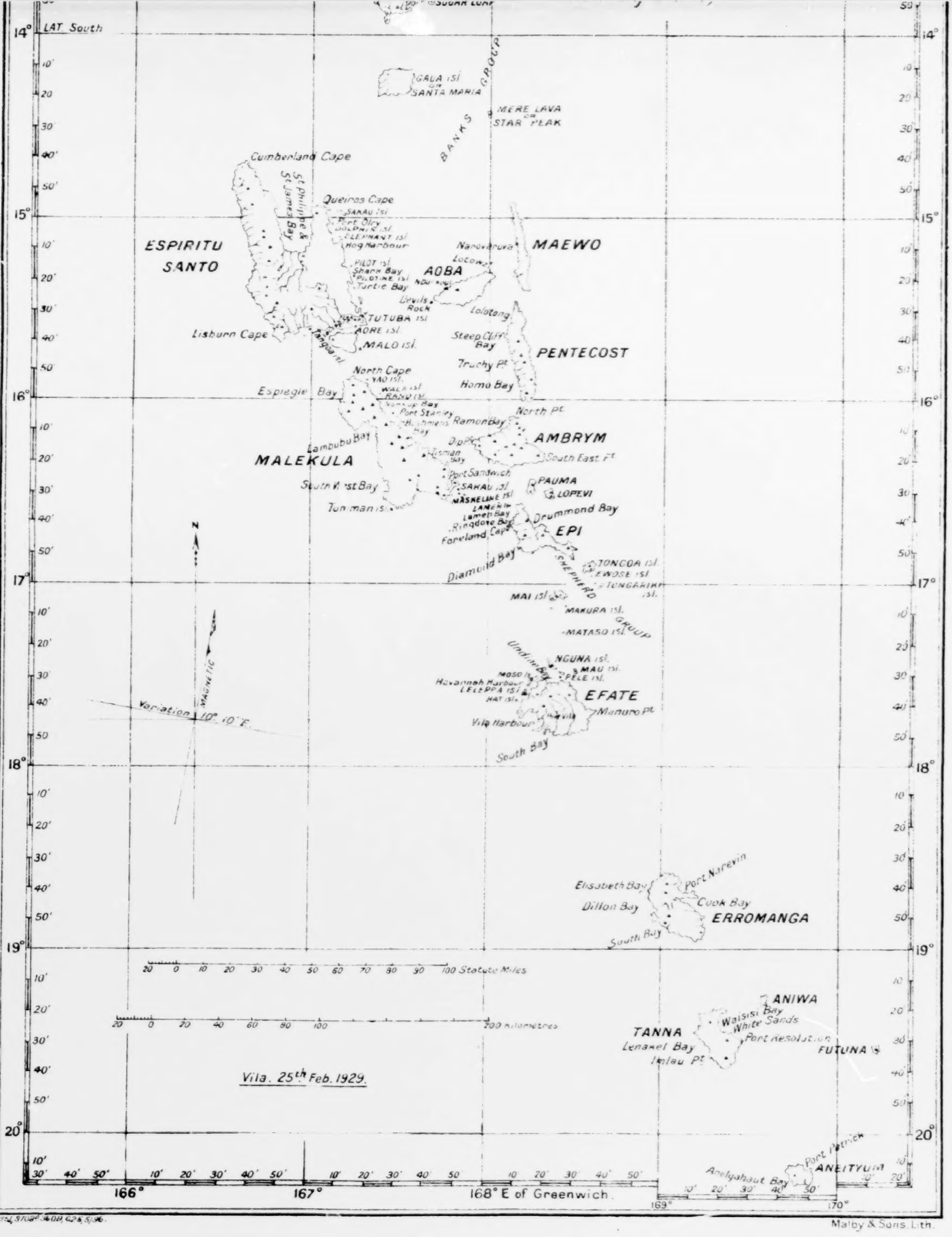





NEW HEBRIDES GROUP
(Compiled from British & French Admiralty Charts.)
166°
167°
168°
169°
170°
14°
15°
16°
17°
LAT South
TORRES GROUP
HIU ISL
TEGUA ISL
LO ISL
TOGA ISL
UREPARAPARA ISL
SADDLE ISL
VANUA LAVA
Port Patteson
SUGAR LOAF
GALA ISL or SANTA MARIA
BANKS GROUP
MERE LAVA or STAR PEAK
Cumberland Cape
St Philippe & St James Bay
Queiros Cape
SAKAU ISL
Port Olry
DOLPHIN ISL
ELEPHANT ISL
Hog Harbour
ESPIRITU SANTO
PILOT ISL
Shark Bay
PILOTINE ISL
Turtle Bay
Nanoveruva
Lotowai
MAEWO
AOBA
NDUI NUI
Devils Rock
Lolotong
TUTUBA ISL
AORE ISL
Lisburn Cape
MALO ISL
Tangoa ISL
Steep Cliff Bay
PENTECOST
Truchy Pt
Homo Bay
North Cape
YAO ISL
WALA ISL
RANO ISL
Espiegle Bay
Vo Vup Bay
Port Stanley
Bushmens Bay
Ramon Bay
North Pt
AMBRYM
Dip Pt
Lambubu Bay
Tisman Bay
South East Pt
MALEKULA
Port Sandwich
PAUMA
LOPEVI
SAKAU ISL
MASKELINE ISL
South West Bay
Tomman ISL
LAMEN
Lamen Bay
Ringdove Bay
Drummond Bay
Foreland Cape
EPI
Dieulouard Bay
SHEPHERD GROUP
TONGOA ISL
EWOSE ISL
TONGARIKI ISL
MAI ISL
MAKURA ISL
MATASO ISL
Undine Bay
NGUNA ISL
MAU ISL
MOSO ISL
PELE ISL
Havannah Harbour
LELEPA ISL
NAT ISL
EFATE
Manuro Pt
Vila Harbour
VILA
N
MAGNETIC
Variation 10° 10' E



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ANNUAL REPORT ON THE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC PROGRESS OF THE PEOPLE OF THE NEW HEBRIDES, 1935

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I.—GEOGRAPHY, CLIMATE, AND HISTORY.

Geography.

The New Hebrides lie between the 13th and 21st degrees of South latitude, and the 166th and 170th degrees of East longitude, and are of an area of roughly 5,700 square miles.

The Group includes the islands of the Banks and Torres Groups, the former lying a few miles due north of the main Group, and the latter about 40 miles to the north-west of the Banks, the whole forming an irregular double chain some 440 miles in length.

The largest island of the Group is Santo, of an area of approximately 1,500 square miles, and a coastline of about 200 miles. The southern and western sides are very mountainous and rugged, some of the ranges rising to a height of over 6,000 ft. The next largest island is Malekula, which although very much broken up by mountain ranges is not so mountainous as Santo.

Other larger islands in their order of importance are Efate, Ambrym, Erromanga, Epi, Aoba, Pentecost and Maewo, and Gaua and Vanua Lava of the Banks Group. In addition to these are some 80 small islands and islets.

There are three active volcanoes in the Group, situated on the islands of Tanna, Ambrym and Lopevi, respectively. The first two are in a constant state of eruption, and the last-named somewhat quiescent, emitting smoke and vapour at irregular intervals.

The Group possesses four good harbours, Vila and Havannah Harbours situated on the island of Efate, and Ports Sandwich and Stanley on Malekula, besides a number of good sheltered anchorages such as the Segond Channel and Pallicollo on Santo, Ringdove Bay on Epi, The Maskelynes off South Malekula, Undine Bay on Efate, and Anelgahaut on Aneityum.

The headquarters of the Administration are situated on the shores of Vila Harbour, which is also the chief commercial centre of the Group. Other important settlements are located at Epi, Malekula, and the Segond Channel, Santo.

The Group is generally well-watered. On the larger islands are several small rivers navigable to boats and small motor craft for a distance of some miles. The only lake of any size in the Group is found on top of the island of Gaua in the Banks Group, and is some four miles in circumference.

Climate.

The New Hebrides islands are classed as unhealthy. The climate, although very enervating, is not worse than that of many other tropical places. The year is divided up, generally speaking, into two seasons, the hot and wet season, commencing in November and ending in April, and the dry and cool season from May to October: Of late, however, the tendency is for the line of demarcation to become less clear, there being considerable periods of drought in the rainy season and vice versa in the dry season. The temperature in the island of Efate ranges from a minimum of about 60° F. in the cool season to a maximum of about 92° F. in the hot. The hot season is the most unhealthy owing to the extreme humidity and the prevalence of mosquitoes. Also it is so enervating as to make recovery from an illness somewhat prolonged. The cool season is, generally speaking, healthy and very pleasant. The southern islands of the Group are cooler and healthier than the northern—the latter being about 7° F. warmer on the average.

History.

The New Hebrides Group was discovered by the Spanish explorer, de Quiros, in the year 1606. Under the impression that he had at last found the long-sought Southern Continent, the quest for which occupied the navigators of this period, he called it " Tierra Australis del Espiritu Santo ". He anchored in a large bay to which he gave the name of St. Phillip and St. James and on the shores of a river flowing into that bay he established the settlement of La Nuova Jerusalem. To the port which undoubtedly existed in those days he gave the name of Vera Cruz. This island is to-day known as Santo. Owing to sickness, and

dissensions with the natives, the settlement was soon abandoned, and to-day, so far as is known, no traces of it exist. The port of Vera Cruz has likewise disappeared, nor can its original site be traced along the 40 odd miles of coastline forming the bay.

Nothing more was heard of the Group until some 160 years later, when in 1768, the French navigator, Bougainville, passed to the southward of de Quiros's discovery, and sailed between the islands known to-day as Santo and Malekula, thus disproving de Quiros's claims to the discovery of the great Southern Continent. The strait through which he passed still bears his name. On the same voyage he discovered the islands of Pentecost, Aoba, and Maeovo, to which he gave the name of the Cyclades.

It remained, however, for the great navigator, Captain Cook, to discover and chart the greater part of the Group in the year 1774, when, entering the Group from the north, he sailed to the southward, discovering and naming the majority of the islands which form the southern chain of the Group. It is recorded that among other places visited he spent some 15 days in the then snug little harbour of Port Resolution on the island of Tanna. Since those days, however, the floor of the harbour has risen, and where Captain Cook anchored in four fathoms of water, to-day a small launch will scarcely float.

Among other early visitors may be cited Laperouse, who is supposed to have visited the Group in 1788; and d'Entrecasteaux, who came in search of Laperouse in 1793.

In the same year the Banks Islands were sighted by Bligh on the occasion of his famous voyage in an open boat to Timor after the mutiny on the *Bounty*.

Dumont d'Urville, Belcher, and Markham, are among the early voyagers whose accounts of these islands are of interest.

By virtue of the Anglo-French Convention of 16th November, 1887, whereby, among other things, each nation agreed not to exercise a separate control over the Group, a Joint Naval Commission was appointed, consisting of the respective Captains and two Officers from each of the two warships which then paid periodical visits to the Group. The Commission was charged with the protection of the lives and property of the subjects of the two nations—France and England—in the islands.

By the year 1895 a number of British and French subjects had settled in the Group and the necessity was felt for some jurisdiction to deal with their disputes, in consequence of which an Arbitration Court was established by the colonists, but the Joint Naval Commission pronounced its veto and the Court was dissolved.

In 1902 the Group had assumed sufficient importance to necessitate the appointment of Resident Commissioners to deal with such judicial cases as came within their jurisdiction. In 1902 the first British Resident Commissioner was appointed, the French Government having a short time previously appointed a similar officer.

II.—GOVERNMENT.

By the Convention of 20th October, 1906, between the United Kingdom and France, British-French Condominium Government was established. The executive consists of a British and a French Resident Commissioner acting in concert, assisted by a staff of officers. The Administrative Departments of the Condominium are staffed by officers of both nationalities who are subject to the control of the Resident Commissioners acting jointly. Each Power retains sovereignty over its own nationals. The seat of Government is at Vila on the island of Efate. Condominium agents of both nationalities are established on various islands of the Group and are allotted areas of control. The executive must in all cases reach joint agreement in decisions affecting the administration of the Condominium. The principal Condominium judicial body is the Joint Court which is composed of a British and a French Judge with a president of neutral nationality. The joint services include finance, posts and telegraphs, customs, public health, lands registry, and public works.

The Convention of 1906 has been superseded by the Convention of 6th August, 1914, which was ratified in 1922.

The British and French Resident Commissioners are subordinate to their respective British and French High Commissioners. The British High Commissioner is stationed at Suva, and the French High Commissioner at Noumea.

III.—POPULATION.

The population of the New Hebrides is composed of some 40,000-60,000 natives and 1,902 non-natives. A statement is appended giving details of the non-native population.

Description.	*British.*			*French.*			*Totals.*
	Adult Males.	*Females and Children*	*Total.*	*Adult Males.*	*Females and Children.*	*Total.*	
Nationals	103	75	178	282	449	731	909
Foreigners opted under Protocol ...	8	4	12	32	—	32	44
Asiatics opted under Protocol	57	4	61	64	—	64	125
Protected subjects and citizens :—							
Tonkinese ...	—	—	—	663	159	822	822
Javanese ...	—	—	—	2	—	2	2
	168	83	251	1,043	608	1,651	1,902

Of the European population, some 300 French and 60 British reside on the island of Efate, mainly in and around the town of Vila. Santo is the next important centre and carries about 35 British and 150 French. The balance is distributed throughout the Group. The European population of the southern part of the Group is almost entirely British, amounting to 30 persons; of this number 25 reside on the island of Tanna.

The Chinese and Japanese community number 93 and 32 respectively and are centred in and around the town of Vila.

The primitive state of the New Hebrides precludes the taking of any reliable census of the indigenous population. In certain islands which have been under missionary influence for a number of years it is possible to make a fairly accurate estimate of the inhabitants, but in the more uncivilized islands such as Malekula, Pentecost, and Santo, whose interiors are almost a closed book, it is not possible to form more than a rough estimate of their numbers.

Malekula is credited with the largest population, some 9,000 natives. Next come Santo and Pentecost, about 7,000 each; Tanna, 6,500; Aoba, 6,000; Ambrym, 4,000; Epi, 2,500; and Efate, 2,000. Among the smaller islands whose population is worthy of note may be cited Paama with just over 2,000, and Tongoa with 1,300 inhabitants.

In general, the native population of the Group is on the decline, but in recent years the islands of Tanna, Paama, and Tongoa have shown a slight tendency to an increase. In this connexion it is interesting to note that the natives of these islands appear to be endowed with a keener commercial acumen than their fellows, which, entailing a necessarily increased activity, may have some bearing on their present immunity from decline.

IV.—HEALTH.

The following is a report on the health of the Group by the Chief Condominium Medical Officer:—

" L'état sanitaire a été relativement satisfaisant au cours de l'année 1935. A part les épidémies de grippe qui ont provoqué, par les complications pulmonaires d'assez nombreux décès, il n'y a rien à signaler de particulier au point de vue épidémiologique.

" Ce qui domine dans toutes les îles de l'Archipel c'est le Paludisme qui revêt à certaines époques de l'année principalement au moment des changements de saisons une forme assez sérieuse.

" Une lutte méthodique contre le Paludisme doit être entreprise.

" Cette lutte doit comprendre :

" (*a*) Le Traitement du plus grand nombre possible des paludéens.

" (*b*) La lutte contre les moustiques surtout à l'état larvaire.

" (*c*) L'extension et la surveillance étroite de la quininisation préventive.

" Aucun recensement de la Lèpre n'a encore été fait aux Nouvelles-Hébrides.

" Il est donc impossible de se faire une idée du nombre de lépreux existants dans nos îles. Mais pour l' instant nous n'avons pas les moyens en personnel, ni les crédits suffisants pour faire ce recensement et entreprendre le traitement systématique et la ségrégation des lépreux.

" Il a cependant été créé fin 1934 et en 1935 deux centres provisoires de traitement des lépreux avec les Crédits fournis par la Budget du Condominium. Un sur le Groupe Nord à Santo, dans le paddock de l'Hôpital Français.

" Un sur le groupe Sud à Lenakel (fin 1934).

" A Santo, il a été traité 3 malads (3 hommes).

" A Lenakel, 6 malades (3 femmes, 2 hommes et un enfant).

" Le traitement a consisté, en injection de bleu de méthylène intraveineux (solution à 1 per cent.) et en injection d'hyrganol Dausse, et en injection d'huile de Chaulmoogra.

" Far la méthode des injections intraveineuses de bleu de méthylène, les résultats immédiats sont très rapides et consistent principalement en suppression des douleurs, cicatrisation des ulcérations, arrêt des poussées évolutives : amélioration notable de l'état et du moral-récupération du sommeil. Mais les résultats obtenus ne durent pas ; dès que l'on cesse le traitement, les accidents aigüs reviennent et la marche en avant de la maladie reprend-de façon accélérée-semble-t-il.

" L'Hyrganol Dausse, n'a donné aucun résultat appréciable.

" L'Huile de Chaulmoogra, par contre semble avoir une influence heureuse dans la réparation et la cicatrisation des lésions.

" En résumé, après les grands espoirs que les premiers résultats donnés par le bleu de méthylène avaient fait naître, il ne nous reste qu'une déception assez vive.

" Les améliorations notables et indiscutables obtenues par le bleu de méthylène ne sont par durables. Bien plus la maladie semble avoir reçu un coup de fouet par le traitement et la marche en avant de la maladie semble être accélérée après cessation du traitement.

" Les différentes préparations à l'Huile de Chaulmoogra semblent être le médicament de choix dans le traitement de fond de cette terrible maladie.

Medical Institutions.

There are eight European doctors, four hospitals, and five medical aid posts in the Group. The location of the hospitals and aid posts is as follows :—

Southern Islands.

Tanna.—A well-equipped hospital run by the Presbyterian Mission, assisted by a grant from British funds. A British medical

practitioner is in charge of the hospital. There is also a small French hospital in charge of an officer of the French Medical Service. A leper segregation area was started on Tanna during the year under the auspices of the Condominium Government and treatment is given.

Central Islands.

Efate.—There are two good hospitals at Vila, the John G. Paton Memorial Hospital, administered by the Presbyterian Mission and assisted by a grant from British funds, and the French Government Hospital. These hospitals have trained European staffs and are in the charge of qualified medical officers. The French Government has recently erected a new non-European wing at the French hospital.

Epi.—There is a medical aid post on this island, and a European doctor ministers to the medical welfare of the population.

Malekula.—There is a French Government hospital at Norsup and a European medical officer is in charge. At Port Sandwich there is a French Government medical aid post.

Northern Islands.

Santo.—The French Government have established a hospital in the Segond Channel, Santo, with a European medical officer in charge and European staff.

There are three medical aid posts belonging to the Melanesian Mission, and assisted by a grant from British funds, on Pentecost, Aoba and Vanua Lava.

All these institutions are open to the indigenous population as well as to white residents and Asiatics.

The following gives statistics of the New Hebrides hospitals for the year 1935:—

Cases.	*British Hospitals Vila and Tanna.*		*Total.*	*French Hospitals (amalgamated.)*		*Total.*
	European.	*Natives and Asiatics.*		*European.*	*Natives and Asiatics.*	
In-patients ...	10	585	595	235	1,150	1,385
Out-patients ...	51	6,443	6,494	2,158	19,461	21,619
Total ...	61	7,028	7,089	2,393	20,611	23,004
Deaths ...	—	22	22	7	79	86

Diseases.

Malaria is the principal disease. It is more prevalent in the northern islands than the southern, owing to the difference in climate and rainfall, and the prevalence of large swampy areas. Amoebic dysentery is endemic throughout the year and epidemic

in the hot season. Both these diseases are being combated with success by measures of sanitation. Blackwater fever occurs occasionally among Europeans. The indigenous population suffers chiefly from yaws, hookworm, malaria, and dysentery. The various hospitals in the Group, both Government and Missionary, treat the natives for these complaints.

Sanitation.

Sanitation in the islands of the Group is still in the early stages of development but some progress has been made at Vila, the capital, during the past few years. The water-supply is rain-water collected into large tanks with which all houses are equipped. This system has the disadvantage of providing breeding places for mosquitoes unless adequately protected or periodically treated with kerosene oil. On the other hand, it provides a pure source of supply, and cases of water contamination are rare.

All Government houses in Vila are supplied with septic tanks which prove satisfactory, but most residents adopt the pit system of latrine.

Arrangements are made by the Condominium Administration for the disposal of refuse which is destroyed by incineration.

Sanitary legislation provides for the inspection of all meat tendered for human consumption in Vila, and for the inspection of private and public premises. A Government quarantine station has been established on the north side of the entrance to Vila Harbour.

Periodical inspections of the town of Vila are undertaken by the Sanitary Commission, and a permanent refuse removal squad is responsible for the removal every day of kitchen refuse, etc., and for the cleanliness of the public roads.

V.—HOUSING.

Houses occupied by Europeans in the Group are usually of the one storey bungalow type, containing two or more rooms, and surrounded by a verandah. They are generally constructed of wood and galvanized iron. Owing to the frequency of earthquake shocks, buildings of brick, stone, or concrete, are not favoured.

In the more civilized areas natives are gradually adapting themselves to European ideas of construction, and a marked improvement in native dwelling houses is noticeable in villages adjacent to Vila.

In the outlying islands, mission natives favour dwelling houses constructed of lime mortar, which is a great improvement on the grass humpy of former days, and far more comfortable and sanitary.

The non-mission or heathen native still clings to the insanitary grass or leaf shelter, accommodating the whole of his family and more often than not his pigs and dogs as well. But with the gradual advance of civilization this system is discarded in favour of the more substantial dwellings mentioned above.

The building of houses, etc., in the town of Vila is governed by the provision of a Town Conservancy Regulation which requires all plans of projected buildings to be passed by a Sanitary Commission.

Under the provisions of the same Regulation, householders are bound to keep their premises in good order, clean and free from weeds and undergrowth.

VI.—PRODUCTION.

The chief products of the Group are copra, cocoa and coffee. A fair amount of shell and sandalwood is also exported.

The value of copra produced in 1935 was £61,783, that of cocoa £42,047, and that of coffee £19,367.

The values for 1935 shown in the production and price tables annexed to Chapter VII are in sterling, the franc values having been converted at the market rate of exchange, whereas from 1931 to 1934 the Protocol rate of 124 francs = £1 was employed for conversion of franc values. No useful deductions, therefore, can be drawn from comparison of those prices and values with those of the previous four years.

The general substantial increases in production of staple products were due more to absence of cyclones than to advance in prices. Copra was probably the only product that reacted to a true and considerable rise in price, native production being considerably stimulated.

The price of cotton, once a promising staple produce of the New Hebrides, was still so unremunerative as to cause practical cessation of production.

In addition to the above-mentioned articles, small quantities of maize and wool are exported.

A small sheep station, running some 2,000 to 2,500 sheep, has been successfully operated on the island of Erromanga for some years. Fair prices have been realized for the wool.

A large number of cattle is raised in the Group, but not as an industry, their chief value being for purposes of keeping down grass on plantations and feeding labourers.

With the exception of copra, of which about one-sixth is produced by native owners of small plots of coconut trees, the products referred to above are grown entirely on European-owned plantations, some of them the property of individual owners, others owned by important companies such as the Société Française des Nouvelles-Hébrides, and Société Cottonière, which have large interests in the Group.

Plantations are worked by British settlers with indigenous labourers partly under contract and partly as free and casual labourers. French settlers employ the same class of labour to a large extent, but they are mainly dependent on Tonkinese coolies imported for French settlers by the French authorities.

The proportion of casual or non-contract native labourers, as compared with natives employed under contract by British settlers, is about 2 to 1, and by French settlers, about 4 to 1.

At the end of 1935 there were 822 Tonkinese and two Javanese coolies (including women and children) in the Group.

The maximum period of contract for indigenous labourers is three years, but with the growing popularity of the casual labour system, these lengthy terms are becoming more and more rare; the native prefers short contracts, or if possible, no contract at all. The usual term of contract for imported Tonkinese coolies is five years.

All native labour is subject to the control of the Administration. Conditions of employment are governed by the labour provisions of the Protocol of 1914. In addition, British settlers are subject to the provisions of separate legislation containing restrictions additional to those provided in the Protocol.

No mining, fishing, or manufacturing industries exist in the Group.

There are no cultivations, plantations, or industries worked or owned by persons of non-European descent, other than those of about a score of Tonkinese and Chinese market gardeners in the neighbourhood of the town of Vila, whose produce is all consumed locally.

VII.—COMMERCE.

The New Hebrides soil and climate are excellent for the culture of many tropical products. Planters specialized in copra, cocoa, and coffee. Unfortunately, owing to the lack of scientific methods of preparation and of a system of standardization, these products are very irregular in quality, and owing to their indifferent reputation receive a comparatively low price.

Copra prices showed a substantial improvement during the year and this commodity is now a payable proposition. Cocoa remained depressed, with coffee little better. Other prices were maintained or improved. Owing to the absence of hurricanes during the hot season of 1934-5, the crops were all above recent averages.

Other products exported were cotton, trochas and burghaus shell, sandalwood, maize, hides and bêche-de-mer.

Hides are a by-product of the cattle referred to in the previous section and not an industry, and the quantity exported is negligible. The quantity of bêche-de-mer produced is small and merely a by-product of Japanese and Chinese trochas fishers. Pearl shell is occasionally found, but only in small quantities. Wool is grown successfully on one of the southern islands, but sheep do not flourish in the northern part of the Group.

There are many good trees such as kauri, island teak, and sandalwood, as well as a variety of hardwoods, but as yet these have been little exploited owing to economic and topographical difficulties.

Oranges, lemons, limes, grapefruit, bananas, pineapples, mangoes and avocada pears, etc., grow in profusion, but none are exported on account of lack of available markets.

It is believed that the New Hebrides are rich in mineral wealth. Exploitation has been delayed owing to land tenure difficulties. Coal and sulphur are known to exist.

Large tracts of fertile land are still untouched, awaiting greater stability of markets and security of tenure.

Exports.

COMPARATIVE TABLE IN TONS AND STERLING.

	1928.		1929.		1930.†		1931.†		1932.†		1933.†		1934.†		1935.	
	Tons.	*Value.*	*Tons.*	*Value.*	*Tons.*	*Value.*	*Tons.*	*Value.*	*Tons.*	*Value.*	*Tons.*	*Value.*	*Tons.*	*Value.*	*Tons.*	*Value.*
		£ *		£ *		£ *		£ *		£ *		£ *		£ *		£ §
Copra	12,682	208,954	10,787	147,460	11,883	130,573	10,005	69,886	7,032	36,306	7,045	23,864	6,939	14,886	9,859	61,783
Cocoa	1,422	77,685	2,047	89,088	2,265	73,444	1,505	31,435	1,728	27,967	1,893	28,745	1,728	19,512	2,672	42,047
Cotton	551	43,468	329	31,700	480	26,880	387	9,833	189	3,277	62	1,084	19	307	33	966
Coffee	96	5,534	100	6,530	125	7,892	131	5,712	213	6,571	433	13,937	318	9,624	366	19,367
Trochas and Burghaus Shell ...	61	2,627	57	2,980	55	2,721	102	2,053	112	1,768	110	1,782	130	2,970	98	3,594
Maize	303	2,277	482	4,355	455	3,670	52	298	99	400	35	143	43	209	106	283
Sandalwood ...	54	898	49	957	98	1,978	24	492	69	1,146	61	941	100	1,446	66	1,704
Wool	22	2,453	8	963	16	1,257	9	412	4	170	9	436	9	441	6	515
Cotton Seed ...	1,198	1,210	657	1,060	476	591	1,063	1,286	411	497	128	121	—	—	—	—
Hides	—	—	—	—	—	—	22	349	17	135	21	172	28	273	23	287
Castor Oil Seed ...	—	—	—	—	—	—	21	121	4	22	52	172	29	72	17	69
Coconuts	—	—	—	—	—	—	61	182	107	289	79	185	94	133	40	91
Bêche-de-mer ...	—	—	—	—	—	—	9	104	1	13	18	236	3	39	2	43
Miscellaneous ...	336	975	643	1,139	607	1,514	276	30	28	40	97	21	200	21	136	188
Totals	16,725	346,081	15,159	286,232	16,460	250,520	13,667	122,193	10,014	78,601	10,043	71,839	9,587	49,933	13,423	130,937

* Converted at 124 francs = £1. § Converted at 75 francs = £1. † In these years exports were unfavourably affected by cyclones.

COMPARATIVE TABLE OF LOCAL PRICES OF RAW PRODUCE.

(*Per metric ton.*)

	*1930.**	*1931.**	*1932.**	*1933.**	*1934.**	*1935.†*
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Copra	11	7	5	3·4	2·15	6·25
Coffee	45	35	30	32	32	53
Cocoa	32	21	16	15	11·3	15·6
Cotton ...	56	25	17	18	18	29·35
Maize ...	8	5·7	4	4	5	2·65
Trochas ...	52	24	20	20	28	43
Burghaus ...	12	10	8	6	6	10
Wool	79	47	42	47	68	94

* Converted at 124 francs = £1. † Converted at 75 francs = £1.

Copra prices improved to payable levels and native production was stimulated. The increase in price shown in the above table is due to the 1934 figures having been converted at the Protocol rate of 124 francs = £1.

Other products remained at much the same levels as in 1934, wool alone showing a fair increase in value.

The share of produce exported, as British by British firms and planters was 8·5 per cent. and 7 per cent. for tonnage and value respectively.

Imports.

COMPARATIVE TABLE OF IMPORT VALUES.

Year.	*British currency.*	*French currency.*	*Remarks.*
	£	Francs.	*Converted at :—*
1924	92,201	7,929,327	francs 86 = £
1925	217,863	22,004,232	francs 101 = £
1926	197,840	30,457,405	francs 154 = £
1927	307,939	38,184,562	francs 124 = £
1928	373,797	46,474,828	francs 124 = £
1929	300,035	37,204,343	francs 124 = £
1930	157,541	19,535,138	francs 124 = £
1931	79,997	9,919,635	francs 124 = £
1932	81,587	10,116,807	francs 124 = £
1933	85,544	10,607,515	francs 124 = £
1934	75,993	9,423,132	francs 124 = £
1935	115,492	8,661,951	francs 75 = £

COMPARATIVE TABLE OF CHIEF IMPORTS.

	1930.	*1931.*	*1932.*	*1933.*	*1934.*	*1935.*
	*	*	*	*	*	†
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Beer	968	1,150	1,574	1,240	1,277	1,638
Benzine (petrol) ...	7,761	3,238	3,288	3,741	2,024	2,148
Biscuits	1,234	780	385	496	568	953
Tinned goods and groceries	8,362	2,720	1,603	1,508	1,164	1 766
Cartridges	1,170	280	240	247	284	153
Tobacco	5,363	5,545	4,466	5,140	3,819	5,126
Cement	1,685	780	599	536	1,018	1,311
Lubricating oils... ...	1,952	1,285	273	1,606	1,570	3,230
Spirits	1,706	1,635	2,569	1,590	1,845	3,369
Tinned milk	1,476	1,050	879	943	759	1,208
Kerosene	3,600	2,520	2,340	3,329	1,323	1,814
Rice	22,661	11,254	7,325	4,467	3,335	6,737
Flour	6,137	2,815	2,164	2,143	2,040	3,472
Sugar	2,420	1,610	1,570	1,259	1,316	2,111
Soap	1,141	843	613	575	416	517
Tinned fish	1,883	1,180	462	1,850	590	1,212
Wines (fine)	1,980	1,010	1,424	1,000	511	637
Wines (ordinaire) ...	4,346	4,096	2,493	2,817	1,909	3,092
Gunny bags	2,830	4,857	3,688	4,166	2,084	3,175
Building materials ...	6,612	3,561	3,953	5,701	3,023	6,774
Agricultural— machinery, boats, motor cars	2,210	674	793	2,189	3,796	8,445
Potatoes	1,000	456	347	298	351	566
Tea	—	1,240	789	1,190	800	1,089

* Converted at rate of 124 francs = £1. † Converted at 75 francs = £1.

The values of imports for 1935 cannot be compared with those for 1931 to 1934, as the conversion rate in these latter years was the Protocol rate of 124 francs = £1, while in 1935 the bank rate of exchange was adopted. The total sterling value of imports in 1935 was £115,493.

The only reliable measure of comparison of imports between 1934 and 1935 is by quantities and, in fact, these have varied to no important extent as between the two years.

During 1935 a new import tariff became operative raising the duties on general merchandise from 6 per cent. to 12 per cent. Tobacco and spirits were more severely taxed with duties of 50 per cent. and 30 per cent.

The exchange continued to assist, but to a lesser extent, imports from British sources having been somewhat offset by a reduction in the price of many French articles and by the devaluation of the dollar. American goods (especially tinned food and timber), which had had a restricted market for some time, were imported in increasing quantities. Imports of cheap textiles and other goods continued to be freely made from Japan. Imports made by British firms and individuals amounted to 26 per cent. of the total.

The share of trade of Australia for 1935 was £56,006 sterling, or 48·5 per cent. The chief articles imported from this source are flour, beer, "fine" and "trade" cigarettes and tobacco, tinned meats and fish, potatoes, onions, butter, tinned milk, biscuits, haberdashery, millinery, clothing, and building materials.

Shares of trade of other supplying countries were :—

	£	*Per cent.*
United Kingdom	2,948	2·5
Hong Kong	1,394	1·25
France and French Colonies ...	24,071	21
United States of America	14,052	12·25
Japan	7,865	7
Dutch Indies	2,113	1·5
Various	7,044	6

The principal importing firms are :—(British) Messrs. Burns, Philp (South Sea) Company, Limited; (French) Les Comptoirs Français des Nouvelles-Hébrides, Messrs. Gubbay Frères, and La Société Commerciale Françaises des Iles Françaises du Pacifique.

Three steamers were employed in the inter-island trade. The third (and smallest) was wrecked just after the end of the year. Of the two remaining vessels, one (British) carries a trade room, where the settler is able to purchase most of his requirements and dispose of his produce, whilst the other (French) forms part of the Messageries Maritimes fleet and confines itself to the freighting of cargo and the transport of passengers. In addition there are a number of small trading craft operating, some of which are native-owned.

There are three large stores in Vila, one of which is British. In addition there are numerous small shops in the hands of French, Japanese and Chinese traders. There are two stores at Segond Channel, Santo, both French.

During the year under review there was a considerable improvement in the general trading outlook, owing to the more remunerative price of copra. Not only was more copra made by natives but the natives again began to buy comparatively freely.

Native trading is on the increase, but at present levels of prices there is room for some expansion. Some white traders are setting up native branches of their own businesses for copra and general trading.

VIII.—WAGES AND COST OF LIVING.

Labour and Wages.

Native Labour.

Native labour may be divided into three main classes :—

(*a*) Plantation labour, boats' crews of local small vessels, employees of traders, Government messengers, Constabulary, etc., on contract and otherwise;

(*b*) domestic labour;

(*c*) casual labour, working on steamers, wharves, Government works, etc.

The supply of native labour during the year was equal to the demand. The tendency to employ "free labour" (not under contract) is increasing except in the case of certain plantations which have difficulty in obtaining labour near at hand. The growth of a "free" labour market is a satisfactory feature as it has a tendency to bring the wages and treatment of labour into more exact relationship with prices. It is doubtful, however, if certain plantations would ever be able to be run without a few contracted men at least to ensure the proper harvesting of certain seasonal crops.

In consequence of the gradual disappearance of Tonkinese, French employers have been recruiting natives freely.

The native's aversion from long term engagements is as pronounced as ever; he prefers to work without engagement if possible and will not usually bind himself for more than 12 months.

By nature the native of the New Hebrides is lazy and of mercurial temperament. He will not work unless circumstances compel him. His wants are less simple than formerly, as he has become accustomed to European food and clothing. When times are good labour is exceedingly scarce and dear, as the majority of natives can obtain all they want by the sale of the produce of their lands, and with a minimum of exertion. When times are bad, like the present, the point arrives when the native, having exhausted his hoarded savings, cannot, without a very great deal of exertion himself, obtain the luxuries he desires. He is then faced with the choice of work on his own account, which is unpalatable, or, on the other hand, with either reverting to his natural state in the matter of food (of which there is plenty) and clothing or working for wages. This stage was reached during the course of 1931. Since then employers have found no difficulty in obtaining labour and the production of native-made copra has fallen off to a very considerable extent. Conversely traders have found it difficult to obtain a living, there being no money to buy their wares.

Domestic labour remains by comparison difficult to secure, as neither the male nor the female native takes kindly to this form of service and can rarely be prevailed upon to stay with an employer for an extended period. For this reason the New Hebridean is not efficient as a servant and can rarely be trained to the finer domestic arts.

Wages of most classes of native labour have undergone considerable reduction, but not in ratio to the depression of prices. During the year the current rates of wages were :—

Class (*a*)—

Plantation labourers ...	10s. to £1 10s. per month with food and clothing, whether under engagement or not, generally together with piecework.
Boats' crews	
Traders' employees ...	

Government messengers	£3 per month without food.
Constabulary	From £2 per month with food and clothing.

Note.—Local or casual labour is frequently employed on plantations for picking cotton and seasonal crops on a daily wage from 1s. to 2s. with or without food, according to arrangement.

Class (*b*)—

Domestic labour ...	£1 to £2 per month with food and clothing, whether engaged or not.

Class (*c*)—

Casual labour, other than plantation ...	2s. to 4s. per day with or without food, and according to skill.

The employment of natives under engagement of any kind is governed by the provisions of the Protocol of 1914, and, in the case of British dependents, also by national legislation.

Asiatic Labour.

Asiatic labour consists of:—

(*a*) Indo-Chinese coolies introduced into the territory by the French Government under contract, for employment by French settlers. These Tonkinese are, generally speaking, satisfactory, being of a superior intelligence to the natives, if not physically so strong. They are naturally hard-workers and receive approximately 100 francs a month, plus food, clothing, lodging, etc. The cost to the settler is considerably higher than that of the native labourer as, in addition to wages, he has to bear the cost of transportation to and from Indo-China, Government inspection and medical surveillance, etc. Owing to the depression, a large number of these labourers has been repatriated. At the end of the year, 822 remained.

(*b*) Free Chinese and Japanese labour of the artisan class. These are very few, and work on a day-to-day basis at wages varying according to skill and the demand for labour. Such wages vary from 10s. to £1 a day. There are also a few Chinese employed as stewards, cooks, and firemen, on inter-island steamers at rates varying from £3 to £6 per month with rations.

Cost of Living.

The maintenance of a good standard of living among European residents is an important factor for the preservation of health and

an equitable mental outlook, and it is desirable that it should be as high as circumstances permit. The general standard of European living is good. At Vila, the capital of the Group, living is more expensive than in other parts as facilities for maintaining vegetable gardens and live stock are less. Market gardening is carried out by the Chinese community and by a few natives, and under normal conditions green vegetables can be obtained during seven to nine months of the year. The supply is generally unreliable, being at times in excess of local requirements and at other times the reverse. Fresh meat of fair quality is obtainable from the local butchers and arrangements for supplies of fresh milk can usually be made. Fish is difficult to obtain and the quality is tropical. The stores maintain supplies of clothing, hosiery, boots, etc., but it is more desirable for wearing apparel to be obtained from Australia or Europe. Nearly all perishable food commodities are imported from Australia with the exception of rice and sugar, of which a proportion is imported from Indo-China and Java.

The cost of living in the islands of the Group away from Vila is cheaper and generally more satisfactory; all European residents are able to maintain vegetable gardens and live stock and thus provide themselves with eggs, milk, butter, poultry and meat. The periodical visits of the island vessels supply them with such other commodities as they require.

The following table gives the average retail prices in the town of Vila during 1935:--

Fresh milk	8d. to 10d. per quart.
Flour	2d. to 2½d. per lb.
Rice	1½d. to 3d. per lb.
Sugar	2½d. to 5d. per lb.
Potatoes	2d. to 3d. per lb.
Fresh meat	10d. to 2s. per lb.
Onions	3d. per lb.
Butter	1s. 8d. to 2s. 3d. per lb.
Tea	3s. 3d. to 4s. per lb.
Coffee	1s. 6d. to 1s. 9d. per lb.
Eggs	2s. 6d. to 5s. per dozen.
Poultry	4s. to 8s. each.
Tinned meat	1s. 3d. to 2s. 6d. per lb.
Wood fuel	6s. to 13s. 4d. per cubic metre.
Kerosene	7s. 6d. to 8s. 6d. per tin (4 gallons).
Petrol	7s. 9d. to 8s. 6d. per tin (4 gallons).

IX.—EDUCATION AND WELFARE INSTITUTIONS.

There are no schools controlled or supported by the Condominium Government, nor are there any facilities for European children to receive anything but a primary education, which is not of a very high standard.

The town of Vila has three schools: (1) a school for girls, supported and controlled by the Sisters of the Sacred Heart Mission; (2) a boys' school, supported and controlled by the Marist Mission; and (3) an infants' school run by the French Government. There is also a mixed primary school at Segond Channel, Santo, under the auspices of the Marist Mission. Admission to these schools is not restricted to the children of Europeans and the entrance fees are purely nominal.

The British and French Missions in the Group have various good schools and training institutions for the benefit of the natives. The Presbyterian Mission maintains an excellent school at Tangoa, South Santo, and can accommodate up to 60 pupils. They also maintain other schools throughout the Group. The Melanesian Mission have a good school at Lolowai, Aoba, and schools in the Banks Group. The Seventh Day Adventist Mission have a utilitarian school at Aore Island, Santo, which is equipped with modern machinery for teaching all kinds of woodcraft. The Marist Mission also maintains schools in various islands of the Group.

All these institutions carry out excellent work among the natives and deserve commendation.

The task of educating the New Hebridean has been left in the hands of the various Mission bodies operating in the Group; but in order to appreciate the inestimable services rendered by these Missions in educating and civilizing the wild inhabitants of these islands, a short sketch of missionary endeavour will be of assistance.

The island of Erromanga was the scene of the first essay to wean the native from heathenism, when in the year 1839 John Williams and Harris, under the auspices of the London Missionary Society, landed at Dillons Bay, and in the same year were killed by the natives for whose welfare they strove.

It was not until 1857 that any further attempt was made to bring civilization to the Erromangans. In that year the Reverend G. N. and Mrs. Gordon took up the work, but were subsequently murdered by the natives, to be followed by Gordon's brother, who perished in the same manner. The Gordons were followed by Mr. and Mrs. McNair. Mr. McNair died on the island and was followed by the Reverend Doctor Robertson, who, after many years of danger and hardship had the satisfaction of seeing the whole island under the civilizing influence of Christianity when he left the Group in 1920.

Erromanga is well named " The Martyr's Isle ".

In 1842 an endeavour was made by Messrs. Turner and Nisbet

to convert the Tannese, but their efforts were not attended with success, and after a few months they were forced to flee, barely escaping with their lives. Sixteen years later the Reverend Doctor J. G. Paton took up the work on Tanna but, owing to the hostility of the natives, was compelled to abandon the island after four years. He settled on the adjacent island of Aniwa, where his efforts were attended with every success. Tanna was afterwards occupied by the Reverends Watt and Neilson, whose work materially contributed to the subjugation of the warlike Tannese.

About the year 1850 the control of the missions passed into the charge of the various Presbyterian Church bodies in the Colonies, and in later years the more northern islands of the Group were endowed with missionaries. The following names figure prominently in the list of those devoted men and women who in the early days braved the hardships and dangers of this Group in the task of claiming its inhabitants for civilization: The Reverend Milne of Nguna; Doctors Mackenzie and Macdonald of Efate; Michelsen of Tongoa; Smail and Fraser of Epi; Morton and Watt-Leggatt of Malekula; Annand and Mackenzie of Santo.

Other workers in the New Hebrides mission-field include the Catholic, Melanesian, Church of Christ, and Seventh Day Adventist denominations.

The Catholic Mission was first established on the island of Aneityum in the year 1848, but their stay was not of long duration and the attempt was soon abandoned. They returned to the Group however in 1887, and since that date their influence has gradually extended to the whole Group with the exception of the southern islands, and the Banks and Torres. The year 1933, however, saw the establishment by the Marist Mission of a post on the island of Tanna in the southern portion of the Group.

The Melanesian Mission was in the field about the year 1850, and by agreement with the Presbyterian Missions the northern part of the Group, comprising Aoba, Pentecost, Maeovo, and the Banks and Torres, as yet untouched by the Presbyterians, was abandoned as a Melanesian Mission sphere of influence.

It was on Aoba Island in the year 1905 that the Reverend Godden of this Mission, the latest of mission martyrs at native hands, was brutally murdered by a native of that island.

In 1912 the Seventh Day Adventists started operations on Efate, but later transferred their activities to Ambrym, Malekula, and Santo, and in 1932 to Tanna.

In the task of civilizing the native the importance of education was never lost sight of. Each mission village has its school, where the rudiments of reading and writing are imparted to young and old. To-day there are four good central schools, in addition to the mission station schools, where facilities are provided for primary education of the native. Of these the Training Institution established many years ago by the Presbyterian Mission at Tangoa renders excellent services in fashioning from the raw material

teachers in whose care is confided the task of education. Another invaluable institution of this nature is the Melanesian Mission school on Aoba. The Catholic Mission school at Vila also renders good services in this direction. The year 1925 saw the Seventh Day Adventists installed on the island of Aore, where natives from all parts of the Group in addition to their scholastic studies, receive practical instruction in various arts and crafts.

Apart from the good educational work achieved by the missions, there is the equally important and beneficial medical work undertaken by the Presbyterian Mission, about which much could be written. A few years ago this denomination maintained no less than four well-equipped hospitals in the Group. To-day there are two, one at Tanna and the other at Vila. These hospitals are primarily intended for native patients, but their services are no less appreciated by white sufferers. The hospital established at Dip Point, Ambrym, under the superintendence of Doctor Bowie, to whose skill and kindness not only hundreds of natives but many Europeans alive to-day owe their lives, will always be remembered in connexion with missionary endeavour in this Group. This hospital, in the year 1913, was engulfed, together with the adjoining mission station and native villages, in the tremendous volcanic outburst on that island, and to-day, where the hospital stood, is nothing but a shallow lake.

The mission hospital at Vila was opened in 1912, and is a well appointed building standing on the small island of Iririki in Vila Harbour.

Tanna hospital has been in existence over 25 years and its beneficial services are well known and appreciated by all.

The Melanesian Mission has established on the islands of Aoba, Pentecost and Vanua Lava in the Banks Group, medical aid posts staffed by fully qualified nursing sisters who render valuable assistance to native sufferers in their areas.

Many missionaries of all denominations have been trained in simple medicine and in the giving of injections. They give splendid service in the combating of native diseases such as yaws, hookworm and malaria, and in the sanitary and hygienic education of the native.

X.—COMMUNICATIONS AND TRANSPORT.

Shipping.

Europe.—A two-monthly service of the Messageries Maritimes line is maintained between the terminal points of Dunkirk and Noumea (New Caledonia), via Vila, on both inward and outward voyages. The route is via Tahiti, Panama, Martinique, and Marseilles, and the period of the voyage approximately 53 days between Vila and Marseilles.

Australia.—The s.s. *Morinda* (Burns Philp line) and the s.s. *Laperouse* (Messageries Maritimes) maintain respectively six-weekly and periodical communications with Sydney, New South Wales, the former via Norfolk Island and Lord Howe Island on the outward and homeward voyages from Sydney, and the latter via Lifou, Loyalty Islands, and Noumea, New Caledonia. The s.s. *Laperouse* also maintains a service with Indo-China and Hong Kong.

Dutch Line.—A regular service is also maintained by the Royal Packet Navigation Company's steamer *Van Rees* between Saigon and Noumea and Sydney, touching at Vila about every two months via Batavia, Papua and New Guinea.

New Caledonia.—Periodical communication is maintained with Noumea by the s.s. *Laperouse*, and by the Messageries Maritimes line of steamers previously mentioned, approximately every two months. The French inter-island steamers also pay occasional visits to Noumea.

Inter-Island.—The following steamers make periodical voyages round the Group. They have no fixed itinerary but usually connect at Vila with the French or British mail vessels :—

s.s. *Mirani* (Burns Philp (South Sea) Company Limited) and s.s. *Bucephale* (Messageries Maritimes).

The port of Vila is the port of entry in the Group. The tonnage entered and cleared during 1935 was as follows :—

ENTERED.

	Tons.	
British	11,218	(12 vessels)
French	110,246	(30 vessels)
Other	25,133	(13 vessels)
	146,597	

CLEARED.

	Tons.	
British	10,837	(11 vessels)
French	107,817	(30 vessels)
Other	25,133	(13 vessels)
	143,787	

Ports.

Vessels of any size can enter the Port of Vila but the number of anchorages for large vessels is limited. All loading and discharging is carried out in lighters as the wharves and jetties at Vila are not suitable for vessels exceeding 100 tons.

Railways.

There are no railways in the Group. A two-foot trolley rail track runs from the outskirts of Mélé to Vila—a distance of about four miles—and is used for various commercial purposes. The small wharves, privately-owned by the commercial houses in Vila, are also provided with rails for the transport on trolleys of merchandise and produce to and from the bulk store sheds.

Posts.

Mail communication from and to Europe and Australia is maintained by the mail steamers s.s. *Morinda* every six weeks, and s.s. *Laperouse* periodically, both of which call at Vila and various island ports. These lines are subsidized by His Majesty's Government in the Commonwealth of Australia and the French Government, respectively. The mails, both inward and outward, are sorted at Vila and re-bagged for distribution round the Group by the inter-island steamers, which receive a grant from the Condominium Government for the services performed. The average time for European postal matter to reach Vila by the regular mail routes is 42 to 49 days. The Condominium Government has a postage stamp issue designed to represent the dual control. There are two series of stamps—one British and one French. Both are inscribed in English and French currency.

The Condominium, during 1934, entered into the new Australian-European air mail scheme.

The postal matter handled by the Vila Post Office for 1935 was as follows :—

	From or to British territory.		*From or to French territory.*		*From or to other places.*		*Totals.*
	Received.	*Despatched.*	*Received.*	*Despatched.*	*Received.*	*Despatched.*	
Letters	25,000	19,000	51,000	37,000	3,500	3,000	138,500
Other articles ...	46,000	2,000	32,000	3,000	500	500	84,000
Registered articles	600	1,300	2,950	2,800	100	300	8,050
Air mail articles	10	10	50	350	—	—	420
Totals ...	71,610	22,310	86,000	43,150	4,100	3,800	230,970

Radio-Telegraph.

Communication with the New Hebrides is by radio-telegraph. The Condominium Government maintains a station at Vila. The station is powered at 1½ kilowatts and the call sign is FJX. Reception and transmission are carried out on wavelengths of 17 to 40 metres and 21 to 37 metres respectively and also on the 600 and 800 metre bands. A daily service is maintained with the station

at Suva, Fiji (VPD and VRP), and with the French Government station at Noumea, New Caledonia (FJP). Severe static interferes with the service on the intermediate bands during the hot and rainy season from November to April. The terminal charge of the Vila station is 3d. per word (minimum charge 1s. 6d.). The rate per word for telegrams despatched from Vila to Australia and the United Kingdom is as follows :—

To	*Ordinary.*	*Code.*	*Deferred.*	*D.L.T.*	*X.L.T.*
Australia ...	1s.	8d.	—	—	8d.
United Kingdom	2s. 2d.	1s. 4d.	1s. 1d.	9d. (Minimum charge of 25 words).	9d. (Minimum charge of 10 words).

The traffic handled by the Station during the year under report was as follows :—

Class.	*Words received.*	*Words despatched.*
Official	26,224	26,591
„ Relayed	156	—
Ordinary Private	6,643	4,062
„ Relayed	4,353	—
Code	12,364	14,304
„ Relayed	4,880	—
L.C.	620	708
„ Relayed	511	—
D.L.T.	184	307
„ Relayed	98	—
X.L.T.	72	129
„ Relayed	55	—
Total	56,168	45,841

Total words received and despatched = 102,009.

Roads.

With the exception of the islands of Efate, Tanna and Tongoa, there are very few public highways in the Group suitable for wheeled transport. Tanna has several good roads, one of which traverses the island. There is also a fair road on the island of Tongoa. Vila, the capital and seat of Government, has several roads and these link up with the outlying districts.

Telephones.

Telephone communication is established in the town of Vila and the outlying districts. The system is operated by a central exchange and the service is continuous. There are 52 telephones and 96 miles of wire. During the hurricane season the service is liable to interruption. There are no telephone systems in the other islands of the Group. The annual subscription rate is £4 (unlimited calls).

XI.—BANKING, CURRENCY, WEIGHTS AND MEASURES.

There are no banks in the New Hebrides. The Condominium Government carries out its banking operations through Nouméa (New Caledonia) and Sydney (Australia). It has been the practice in the past for the larger British and French commercial houses at Vila to act as bankers for their clients, but depressed conditions have severely restricted these operations. The Banque de l'Indochine, at Nouméa, issues a local note which circulates in the New Hebrides and is guaranteed by the Bank of France.

The currencies circulating in the New Hebrides Group are sterling, Australian, and French currency; sterling and francs being legal tender. Australian currency is accepted at the prevailing discount rate against sterling.

Australian currency is the chief medium of commerce throughout the Group. The average rates of exchange during the year for sterling and Australian money in relation to the franc were: pound sterling = 75 francs, and pound Australian = 60 francs. The British and French systems of weights and measures are both employed throughout the Group.

XII.—PUBLIC WORKS.

The Condominium maintains a Public Works Department normally controlled by a Superintendent and an Assistant. During the year a proportion of the Condominium houses and buildings in Vila and elsewhere were put into repair and repainted, while the Efate roads were all repaired, and the Tagabe Bridge, on the road from Vila to the outlying districts of Mélé, was replaced by a new bridge in reinforced concrete.

In normal times building material is mostly imported from Australia. Dwelling houses and other buildings are all made of wood and galvanized iron owing to the prevalence of earth tremors.

The construction and maintenance of roads and bridges is carried out partly by the Public Works Department and partly by local contract under Public Works supervision. Semi-metalled roads exist in Efate for a few miles round Vila. There are unmetalled or semi-metalled roads in various parts of the Group, the best being those in the islands of Tanna and Tongoa, which have been made by the natives themselves to facilitate the cartage of produce to the beaches. Such roads are comparatively easy of construction as the underlying hard coral is generally close to the surface and thus cartage of material is minimized. The chief difficulty in maintaining roads is the keeping down of bush.

The use of motor vehicles, and in some islands ox-wagons, has increased the importance of road construction. Most plantations now keep motor transport for their own use and maintain very fair motorways within their own boundaries. These frequently link up

with similar roads on adjoining properties. In this manner most of the existing public roads (now maintained by the Condominium) have come into being and it is probable that public roads and island arteries of the future will be similarly evolved.

The Public Works Department also maintains the harbour light system of Vila Harbour. This consists of an automatic lighthouse on Pango Point, which guides vessels to the mouth of Vila Harbour, and a pair of leading lights on the hills above the harbour which give a line to the deep water entrance. A green light shows the lateral margin of safety for large ships. Pango lighthouse was rebuilt and the mechanism of the leading lights of Vila Harbour were renewed during 1934.

XIII.—JUSTICE, POLICE, AND PRISONS.

Justice.

The Convention of 1914 provided for the immediate introduction of three Courts, namely the Joint Court, and the French and British National Courts, and the subsequent formation of two others—Courts of First Instance and Native Courts.

The scope and functions of these Courts is briefly as follows:—

(1) *Joint Court.*—The Court is composed of a British and a French Judge, with a President of neutral nationality. There is also a Public Prosecutor and a Native Advocate. The Joint Court is a Court of final adjudication in matters of purely Condominium nature. Broadly speaking, and subject to certain exceptions, its civil jurisdiction is confined to certain proceedings in respect of rights over immovable property—its chief function being that of a land Court governing the registration of indefeasible titles to land. It may also settle cases between any parties, native or non-native, brought before it by consent of both. Its criminal jurisdiction, broadly speaking, is confined to offences—(*a*) connected with the recruitment of native labourers, or (*b*) committed by natives against non-natives, or (*c*) committed by natives against natives in areas where the Native Code is in force and involving a penalty of over one year's confinement, or (*d*) against the Convention, or Joint Regulations passed in pursuance thereof, in areas where no Court of First Instance exists.

There is an appeal to the Joint Court from all judgments of Courts of First Instance and from important civil judgments of Native Courts. The Joint Court also has certain revisionary powers in criminal cases of Native Courts, and judgments of Courts of First Instance involving sentence of imprisonment.

(2) *Courts of First Instance.*—The composition of these Courts consists of a British and a French District Agent with a British or French Assessor chosen by lot. Their jurisdiction is over breaches of the 1914 Convention, or of Joint Regulations

made thereunder, except those connected with the recruitment of native labour.

(3) *Native Courts.*—These are composed of either a British or French District Agent, assisted by two native Assessors. The British and French Agents preside over the Courts in turn, month and month about. A necessary corollary to the full and complete functioning of these Courts is the promulgation in the area of the Native Code.

(4) and (5) *National Courts.*—The British and French Governments have established in the Group, in conformity with their existing legal systems, Courts with jurisdiction over all civil cases, other than those reserved to the Joint Court, and over all criminal cases in which a non-native is the defendant. In civil cases the jurisdiction over actions between non-natives belongs in some cases to the Court of the Power under whose law the contract was concluded, or the act or thing in question originated, and in other cases to the Court of the Power to which the defendant belongs. In criminal cases, non-natives are justiciable by the Court of their own nationality or the nationality applied to them.

Courts of First Instance have so far been set up in Central Districts Nos. 1 and 2.

A Code of Native Criminal Law has been instituted and two Native Courts—one in the Central District No. 1 and one in the Southern District—have been formed to administer Penal Law only within their competence and jurisdiction.

The following judgments, other than civil, were recorded by the various Courts :—

	Nature of Judgment.	
	Fine.	*Imprisonment.*
Joint Court	—	10†
Courts of First Instance	6	1
Native Courts	35	34
Resident Commissioner's Courts ...	14	36
British National Court	—	—
Totals	55	81

† Amendments and confirmation of Native Court Judgments (5) and Court of First Instance Judgments (3).

Police.

The policing of the Group is carried out by two separate forces of armed native constabulary, British and French, each in the charge of a National Commandant under the orders of the respective Resident Commissioners. The headquarters are at Vila, and small detachments are located at the District Agencies on the islands of Tanna, Malekula, and Santo, respectively, in order to assist the District Agents in the carrying out of their duties.

The British force is composed of natives recruited from the islands of the New Hebrides, and the French force partly of New

Hebrideans and Loyalty Islanders. In addition, the French have enrolled a number of Tonkinese police, for the purpose of facilitating police operations among the Tonkinese coolies in the Group.

The duties of the native constabulary consist in the maintenance of law and order among the native population of the more civilized areas, general police and patrol work, the guarding of native prisoners, and the repression of native disorders.

Both the British and French Commandants, in addition to their duties as police officers of the Condominium, also act as police officers in so far as their own nationals are concerned, and are charged with the conduct of police cases before their respective National Courts.

The cost of the maintenance of the two forces is defrayed by the respective national Governments, except when the two corps are acting jointly, when the expenses are met from Condominium funds.

The usual term of enlistment for natives of the Group is two years. Some re-engage for further terms. The civilizing influence of the period spent under discipline combined with the regular food and regular hours of work, is an important factor in the lives of these natives; when they return to their homes they have acquired a certain knowledge of, and respect for, the law and white man's justice which cannot fail to be of assistance to them and their fellow islanders in their everyday life and their relations with Europeans.

Prisons.

Each Government maintains its own national prison, which is situated in the town of Vila, and accommodation is provided for both natives and whites. The cost of maintenance of prisoners sentenced by the national tribunals is met from national funds, and that of natives sentenced by the Resident Commissioners and the Native and Mixed Courts, from Condominium funds.

There is no Condominium prison staff. Each Commandant acts as prison keeper and is responsible for the supervision of prisoners placed in his charge. He is assisted by police constables who act as warders.

In addition to the national prisons at headquarters each District Agency is provided with a temporary lock-up in which natives under short sentences are confined.

The class of native prisoner with which the Administration is called upon to deal is almost exclusively confined to those sentenced for breaches of local liquor laws and offenders against the provisions of the Native Penal Code.

Native Prisoners are employed on works of general utility, such as the making and cleaning of roads, weeding Government paddocks, transport of material to various Government buildings, etc.

The daily average of native prisoners confined in the British prison was 12·52 and in the French prison 9·36. No deaths occurred in the British prison. Generally speaking, the health of prisoners was good.

XIV.—LEGISLATION.

The more important legislative acts coming into force during the year were :—

(*a*) Joint Regulation No. 2 of 1935, which amended the New Hebrides Customs Tariff ;

(*b*) Joint Regulation No. 3 of 1935, which imposed a temporary levy on Condominium salaries ; and

(*c*) Joint Regulation No. 6 of 1935, which amended the Collection of Customs Regulation and provided powers for the better collection of dues outside Vila.

XV.—PUBLIC FINANCE AND TAXATION.

By Article 5 of the Convention of 1914 each of the two Powers is required to defray the expenses of its own Administration in the Group. The cost of the joint services is defrayed out of local taxation. The joint services include finance, posts and telegraphs, customs, public works, ports and harbours, public health, the Joint Court and the Summary Courts and Lands Registry. In the event of revenue from local taxation proving insufficient to meet jointly approved expenditure, the two Signatory Powers contribute the deficit in equal proportions. Since the year 1921 the Condominium has been self-supporting, but owing to the falling off in revenue, due to the general commercial depression, contributions were required in the years 1931, 1932, 1933, 1934 and 1935, from each Government.

REVENUE AND EXPENDITURE.

CONDOMINIUM REVENUE.

Year.	*French Currency.*			*British Currency.*	*Remarks.* Converted at :
1927	Francs	3,037,711	or	£24,497	Francs. 124 = £1
1928	,,	3,463,551	or	£27,932	,, ,,
1929	,,	3,549,562	or	£28,624	,, ,,
1930	,,	2,402,829	or	£19,378	,, ,,
1931	,,	1,592,941	or	£12,846	,, ,,
1932	,,	1,242,635	or	£10,021	,, ,,
1933	,,	1,379,644	or	£11,126	,, ,,
1934	,,	1,329,249	or	£10,719	,, ,,
1935				£23,008	Francs 75 = £1

CONDOMINIUM EXPENDITURE.

Year.	*French Currency.*			*British Currency.*	*Remarks.* Converted at :
1927	Francs	2,220,479	or	£17,907	Francs 124 = £1.
1928	,,	3,568,404	or	£28,777	,, ,,
1929	,,	3,210,639	or	£25,892	,, ,,
1930	,,	3,509,011	or	£28,298	,, ,,
1931	,,	3,013,698	or	£24,304	,, ,,
1932	,,	2,455,448	or	£19,802	,, ,,
1933	,,	2,358,346	or	£19,019	,, ,,
1934	,,	2,884,240	or	£23,362	,, ,,
1935				£26,102	Francs 75 = £1.

The chief sources of Condominium revenue are import and export taxes and port dues, which normally account for some four-fifths of the receipts. Other sources of income are postal and telegraphic receipts, Court fees and fines, survey fees, trading licences, taxes on vehicles, Lands Registry fees, and miscellaneous receipts.

The following is a brief table of the principal import duties current during the year :—

General merchandise, unspecified	12 per cent. *ad valorem.*
Gramophones, records, perfumery, lace, rifles, revolvers, and cartridges	20 „ „ „
Spirits	30 „ „ „
Tobacco	50 „ „ „
Wines	5 to 12 „ „ „
Petrol, lubricating and combustible oils	10 „ „ „
Kerosene	6 „ „ „
Shotguns and cartridges, detonators	100 „ „ „
Beer	1s. per gallon.
Dynamite	1s. 10d. per lb.
Fuse	6d. per 24 feet.

No duty is levied on the following articles :—official uniforms and robes, live stock, books, cereals and seeds, ship's biscuit, coal, fertilizers, medical appliances and drugs for hospitals, microscopes, plants, vaccines and lymphs, fresh vegetables and fruit.

The main heads of taxation and actual yields for the year 1935 are tabulated as follows :—

	£
Inland Revenue (trading and other licences) ...	628
Post Office	776
Port dues	834
Court and Survey fees	2,337
Import duties	14,809
Export duties	1,389
Wireless telegraph (gross)	1,357
Lands Registry	93

EXPENDITURE ON SERVICES ENTIRELY BRITISH.

	£
1927-28	16,048
1928-29	11,966
1929-30	9,506
1930-31	10,314
1931-32	9,540
1932-33	9,106
1933-34	8,615
1934-35	9,346

This expenditure is defrayed from funds provided by Parliament on Civil Estimates, Vote for Colonial and Middle Eastern Services,

Class II, 9. Certain miscellaneous receipts, such as Court fees and fines, and rent, totalling about a hundred pounds annually, are applied in reduction of the Vote on which expenditure is provided for. The expenditure on British services includes, among other things, the personal emoluments of the British national staff, Police Force, and District Agents, and maintenance of houses of officers and police barracks.

The French Government maintains at national expense services similar to the above.

XVI.—MISCELLANEOUS.

Lands and Survey.

Land owned by settlers in the New Hebrides was acquired originally from native owners, either by purchase or barter. Ownership at the present day is based on these native deeds, but such deeds do not constitute a valid title until judgment has been pronounced upon them by the Joint Court. The procedure in regard to obtaining indefeasible titles to land in the New Hebrides is set out in Articles 22 to 27 of the Protocol of 1914. Approximately 1,000 claims have been lodged in the Joint Court representing an area of 2,150,000 acres, more or less.

The adjudication of land claims on Efate was completed during 1932 and the majority of claims in the Southern Islands similarly dealt with during 1933 and 1934. During 1934 and 1935 survey of Epi and adjacent islands was commenced.

The speed with which claims have been dealt with has been dependent to a large extent on the progress of land surveys of the properties affected, and of the claims of opposing applicants for title.

A staff of surveyors is attached to the Court, but owing to the difficult nature of the country to be surveyed and identified, progress is necessarily slow. For financial reasons the staff of surveyors has lately been kept at a minimum.

In the adjudication of land claims, due consideration is given to the needs of the indigenous population that may be occupying lands coming up for registration. The Court instructs its surveyors to report on such matters in the course of their work, and is guided by such reports in deciding the desirability or necessity of making native reserves. The Anglo-French Protocol provides for the appointment of an official Native Advocate by the two Governments to watch over native interests in land matters and to bring to the notice of the Court instances of usurpation of land by settlers, as well as to assist them in opposing claims before the Court. The Torrens system of land registration has been adapted to the New Hebrides.

Atmospheric Disturbances.

A cyclone of medium intensity passed over the Group in December, 1935, damaging plantations and buildings in a few centres. A few small craft were lost.

General.

The French Resident Commissioner (M. Sautot) was transferred to Tahiti in April and M. Casimir was appointed Acting French Resident Commissioner.

H.M.S. *Wellington* (Commander J. B. E. Hall, R.N.) of the New Zealand Squadron visited the Group during July.

The Silver Jubilee of His late Majesty King George V was celebrated on 6th May with great enthusiasm by the whole mixed community of the islands.

APPENDIX.

A Select Bibliography of the New Hebrides.

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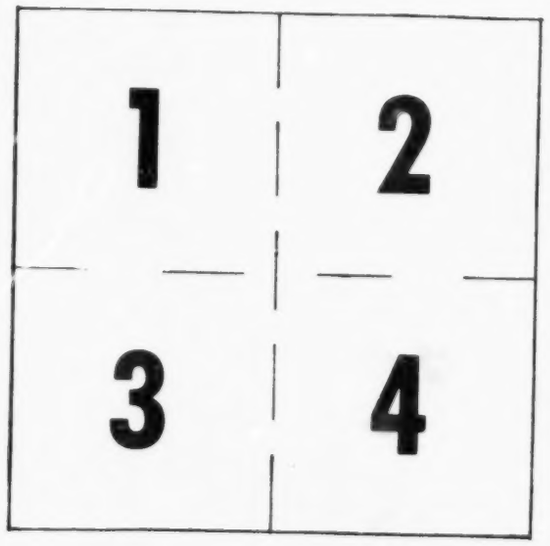

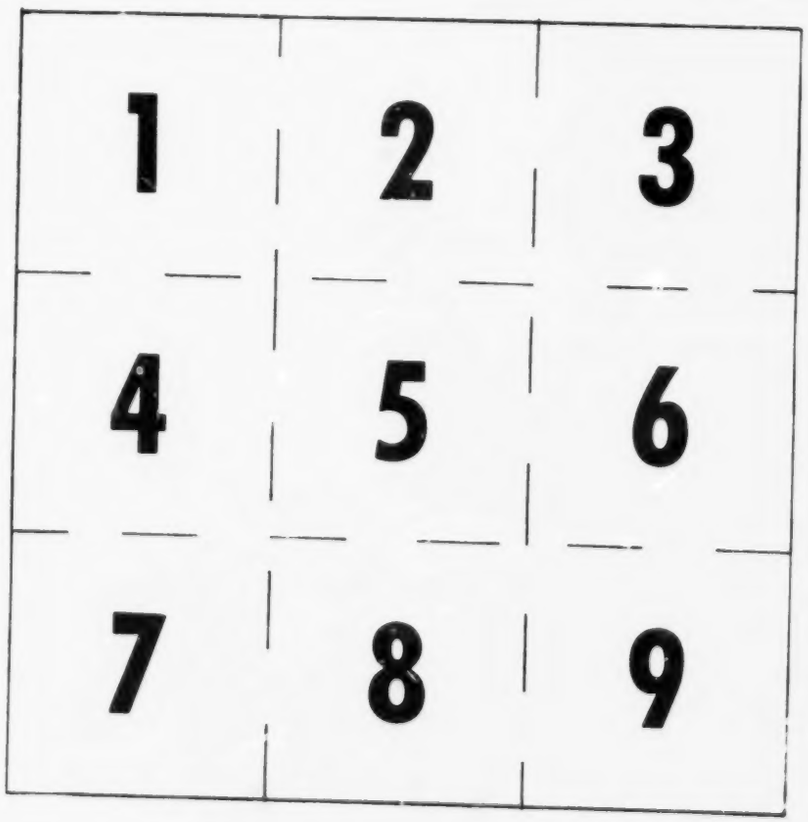

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SUGAR LOAF
LAT. South
GAUA ISL. OR SANTA MARIA
MERE LAVA
STAR OR PEAK
BANKS GROUP
Cumberland Cape
St Philippe & St James Bay
Queiros Cape
SAKAU ISL.
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Hog Harbour
ESPIRITU SANTO
PILOT ISL.
Shark Bay
PILOTINE ISL.
Turtle Bay
AOBA
Nanovarova
Lotowai
MAEWO
Devils Rock
TUTUBA ISL.
ORE ISL.
MALO ISL.
Lisburn Cape
Lolotong
Steep Cliff Bay
Truchy Pt.
PENTECOST
North Cape
YAO ISL.
WALA ISL.
RANO ISL.
Espiegle Bay
Homo Bay
Norsup Bay
Port Stanley
Bushmans Bay
Ramon Bay
North Pt.
AMBRYM
Lambubu Bay
MALEKULA
Tisman Bay
Dip Pt.
South East Pt.
Port Sandwich
PAUMA
LOPEVI
SAKAU ISL.
South West Bay
MASHELANE ISL.
LAMEN Bay
Tomman ISL.
Lamen Bay
Ringdove Bay
Foreland Cape
Drummond Bay
EPI
Diamond Bay
SHEPHERD
TONGOA ISL.
EWOSE ISL.
TONGARIKI ISL.
MAI ISL.
MAKURA ISL.
MATASO ISL.
GROUP
Undine Bay
NGUNA ISL.
MAU ISL.
PELE ISL.
Havannah Harbour
MOSO I.
LELEPPA ISL.
HAT ISL.
EFATE
Manuro Pt.
Vila Harbour
Port Vila
South Bay
N
MAGNETIC
Variation 10° 10' E.
Port Narevin
Cook Bay
Dillon Bay
South Bay
ERROMANGA
20 0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100 Statute Miles
20 0 20 40 60 80 100 200 Kilometres
ANIWA
Waisisi Bay
White Sands
Port Resolution
TANNA
Lenakel Bay
Imlau Pt.
FUTUNA
Vila. 25th Feb. 1929.
Port Patrick
ANEITYUM
Anelgahaut Bay
166° 167° 168° E of Greenwich. 169° 170°
14° 15° 16° 17° 18° 19° 20°

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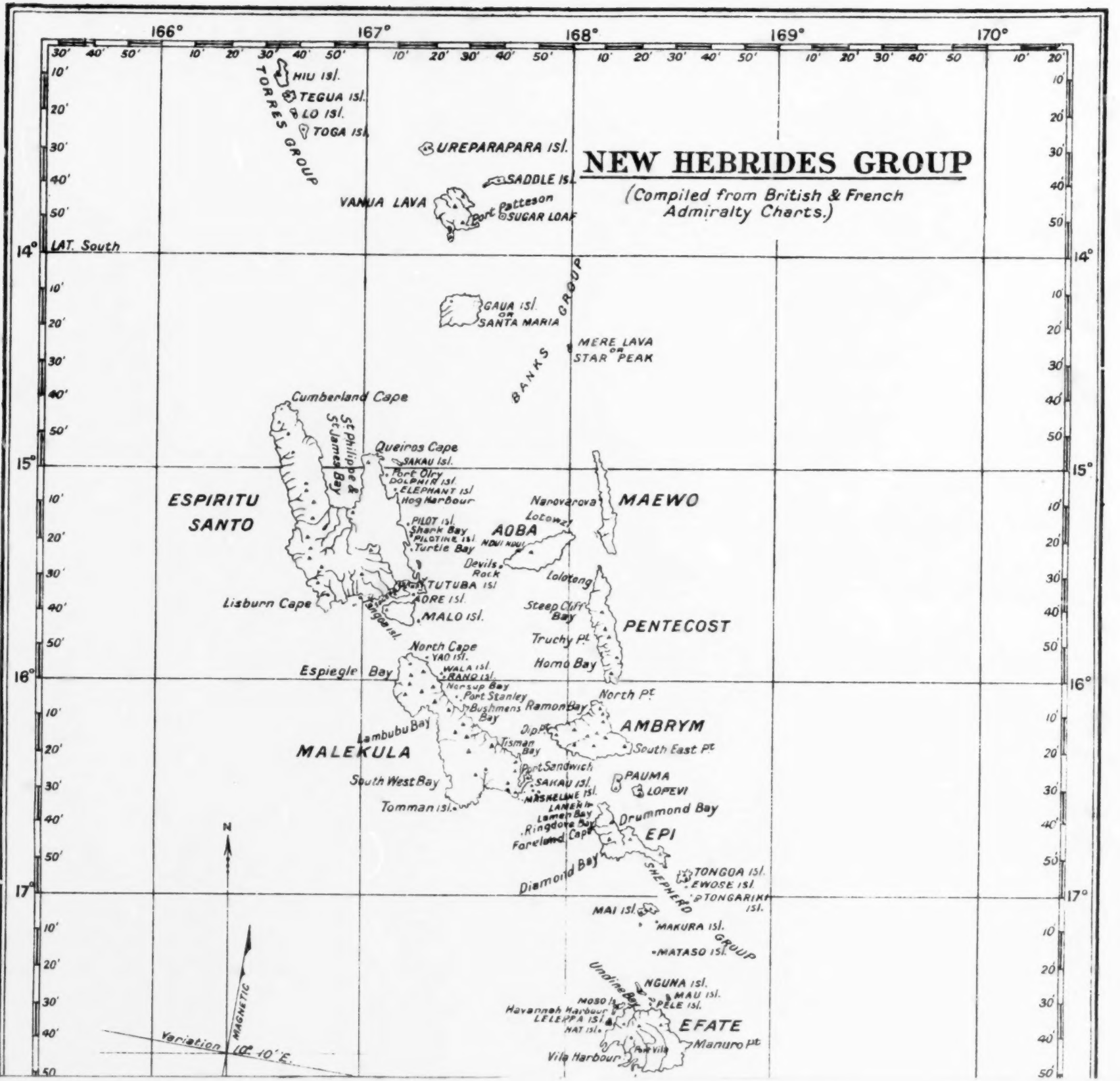
NEW HEBRIDES GROUP
(Compiled from British & French Admiralty Charts.)
166°
167°
168°
169°
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15°
16°
17°
LAT. South
TORRES GROUP
HIU ISL.
TEGUA ISL.
PLO ISL.
TOGA ISL.
UREPARAPARA ISL.
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Lisburn Cape
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Tisman Bay
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South East Pt.
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Continued on page 3 of cover

ANNUAL REPORT ON THE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC PROGRESS OF THE PEOPLE OF THE NEW HEBRIDES, 1936

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I.—GEOGRAPHY, CLIMATE AND HISTORY.

Geography.

The New Hebrides lie between the 13th and 21st degrees of South latitude, and the 166th and 170th degrees of East longitude, and are of an area of roughly 5,700 square miles.

The Group includes those of the Banks and Torres, the former lying a few miles due north of the main Group, and the latter about 40 miles to the north-west of the Banks the whole forming an irregular double chain some 440 miles in length.

The largest island of the Group is Santo, of an area of approximately 1,500 square miles, and a coastline of about 200 miles. The southern and western sides are very mountainous and rugged, some of the ranges rising to a height of over 6,000 feet. The next largest island is Malekula, which although very much broken up by mountain ranges is not so mountainous as Santo.

Other larger islands in their order of importance are Efate, Ambrym, Erromanga, Epi, Aoba, Pentecost and Maeovo, and Gaua and Vanua Lava of the Banks Group. In addition to these are some 80 small islands and islets.

There are three active volcanoes in the Group situated on the islands of Tanna, Ambrym and Lopevi, respectively. The first two are in a constant state of eruption, and the last named

somewhat quiescent, emitting smoke and vapour at irregular intervals.

The Group possesses four good harbours, Vila and Havannah Harbours situated on the island of Efate, and Ports Sandwich and Stanley on Malekula, besides a number of good sheltered anchorages such as the Segond Channel and Pallicollo on Santo, Ringdove Bay on Epi, The Maskelynes off South Malekula, Undine Bay on Efate, and Anelgahaut on Aneityum.

The Headquarters of the Administration are situated on the shores of Vila Harbour, which is also the chief commercial centre of the Group. Other important settlements are located at Epi, Malekula, and the Segond Channel, Santo.

The Group is generally well watered. On the larger islands are several small rivers navigable to boats and small motor craft for a distance of some miles. The only lake of any size in the Group is found on top of the island of Gaua in the Banks Group, and is some four miles in circumference.

Climate.

The New Hebrides islands are classed as unhealthy. The climate, although very enervating is not worse than that of many other tropical places. The year is divided up, generally speaking, into two seasons, the hot and wet season, commencing in November and ending in April, and the dry and cool season from May to October. Of late, however, the tendency is for the line of demarcation to become less clear, there being considerable periods of drought in the rainy season and vice versa in the dry season. The temperature in the island of Efate ranges from a minimum of about 60° F. in the cool season to a maximum of about 92° F. in the hot. The hot season is the most unhealthy owing to the extreme humidity and the prevalence of mosquitoes. Also it is so enervating as to make recovery from an illness somewhat prolonged. The cool season is, generally speaking, healthy and very pleasant. The southern islands of the Group are cooler and healthier than the northern —the latter being about 7° F. warmer on the average.

History.

The New Hebrides Group was discovered by the Spanish explorer de Quiros in the year 1606. Under the impression that he had at last found the long-sought Southern Continent, the quest for which occupied the navigators of this period, he called it " Tierra Australis del Espiritu Santo ". He anchored in a large bay to which he gave the name of St. Phillip and St. James, and on the shores of a river flowing into that bay he established the settlement of La Nuova Jerusalem. To the port which undoubtedly existed in those days he gave the name of Vera Cruz. This island is to-day known as Santo. Owing to sickness and to dissensions with the natives the settlement was soon abandoned, and to-day, so far as is known, no traces

of it exist. The port of Vera Cruz has likewise disappeared, nor can its original site be traced along the 40 odd miles of coastline forming the bay.

Nothing more was heard of the Group until some 160 years later, when in 1768 the French navigator Bougainville passed to the southward of de Quiros's discovery and sailed between the islands known to-day as Santo and Malekula, thus disproving de Quiros's claims to the discovery of the great Southern Continent. The strait through which he passed still bears his name. On the same voyage he discovered the islands of Pentecost, Aoba, and Maeovo, to which he gave the name of the Cyclades.

It remained, however, for the great navigator Captain Cook to discover and chart the greater part of the Group in the year 1774, when, entering the Group from the north, he sailed to the southward, discovering and naming the majority of the islands which form the southern chain of the Group. It is recorded that among other places visited he spent some fifteen days in the then snug little harbour of Port Resolution on the island of Tanna. Since those days, however, the floor of the harbour has risen, and where Captain Cook anchored in four fathoms of water, to-day a small launch will scarcely float.

Among other early visitors may be cited Laperouse who is supposed to have visited the Group in 1788; and d'Entrecasteaux, who came in search of Laperouse in 1793.

In the same year the Banks Islands were sighted by Bligh on the occasion of his famous voyage in an open boat to Timor after the mutiny of the " Bounty."

Dumont d'Urville, Belcher, and Markham are among the early voyagers whose accounts of these islands are of interest.

By virtue of the Anglo-French Convention of 16th November, 1887, whereby, among other things, each nation agreed not to exercise a separate control over the Group, a Joint Naval Commission was appointed, consisting of the respective Captains and two officers from each of the two warships which then paid periodical visits to the Group. The Commission was charged with the protection of the lives and property of the subjects of the two nations—France and England—in the islands.

By the year 1895 a number of British and French subjects had settled in the Group, and the necessity was felt for some jurisdiction to deal with their disputes, in consequence of which an Arbitration Court was established by the colonists, but the Joint Naval Commission pronounced its veto and the Court was dissolved.

In 1902 the Group had assumed sufficient importance to necessitate the appointment of Resident Commissioners to deal with such judicial cases as came within their jurisdiction. In 1902 the first British Resident Commissioner was appointed, the French Government having a short time previously appointed a similar officer.

II.—GOVERNMENT.

By the Convention of 20th October, 1906, between the United Kingdom and France, British-French Condominium Government was established. The executive consists of a British and French Resident Commissioner acting in concert, assisted by a staff of Officers. The Administrative Departments of the Condominium are staffed by officers of both nationalities who are subject to the control of the Resident Commissioners acting jointly. Each Power retains sovereignty over its own nationals. The seat of Government is at Vila on the island of Efate. Condominium Agents of both nationalities are established on various islands of the Group and are allotted areas of control. The executive must in all cases reach joint agreement in decisions affecting the administration of the Condominium. The principal Condominium Judicial body is the Joint Court which is composed of a British and a French Judge with a President of neutral nationality. The joint services include finance, posts and telegraphs, customs, public health, lands registry, and public works.

The Convention of 1906 has been superseded by the Convention of 6th August, 1914, which was ratified in 1922.

The British and French Resident Commissioners are subordinate to their respective British and French High Commissioners. The British High Commissioner is stationed at Suva, and the French High Commissioner at Noumea.

III.—POPULATION.

The population of the New Hebrides is composed of some 40,000 natives and 2,166 non-natives. A statement is appended giving details of the non-native population.

Description.	*British.*			*French.*			*Totals.*
	Adult Males.	*Females and Children*	*Total.*	*Adult Males.*	*Females and Children.*	*Total.*	
Nationals ...	105	92	197	288	462	750	947
Foreigners opted under Protocol	7	4	11	32	—	32	43
Asiatics opted under Protocol	50	7	57	77	—	77	134
Protected subjects and citizens :—							
Tonkinese	—	—	—	842	198	1,040	1,040
Javanese	—	—	—	2	—	2	2
Totals...	162	103	265	1,241	660	1,901	2,166

Of the European population, some 300 French and 60 British reside on the island of Efate, mainly in and around the town of Vila. Santo is the next important centre and carries about 35 British and 200 French. The balance is distributed throughout the Group. The European population of the southern part of the Group is almost entirely British, amounting to 30 persons; of this number, 25 reside on the island of Tanna.

The Chinese and Japanese community number 86 and 48 respectively and are centred in and around the town of Vila.

The primitive state of the New Hebrides precludes the taking of any reliable census of the indigenous population. In certain islands which have been under missionary influence for a number of years it is possible to make a fairly accurate estimate of the inhabitants, but in the more uncivilized islands such as Malekula, Pentecost, and Santo, whose interiors are almost a closed book, it is not possible to form more than a rough estimate of their numbers.

Malekula is credited with the largest population, some 9,000 natives. Next come Santo and Pentecost, about 7,000 each; Tanna, 6,500; Aoba, 6,000; Ambrym, 4,000; Epi, 2,500; and Efate, 2,000. Among the smaller islands whose population is worthy of note may be cited Paama with just over 2,000, and Tongoa with 1,300 inhabitants.

In general the native population of the Group is on the decline, but in recent years the islands of Tanna, Paama and Tongoa have shown a slight tendency to an increase. In this connexion it is interesting to note that the natives of these islands appear to be endowed with a keener commercial acumen than their fellows, which, entailing a necessarily increased activity, may have some bearing on their present immunity from decline.

IV.—HEALTH.

The following is a report on the health of the Group by the Chief Condominium Medical Officer:—

" Les maladies pestilentielles: Fièvre jaune, Pest, Choléra, Typhus exanthématique n'existent pas aux Nouvelles-Hébrides.

" Le Paludisme est la grande endémie.

" La lutte antimoustique, toujours difficile, sera complété au cours de l'année 1937, dans le Chef Lieu, par la lutte antilarvaire.

" Jusqu'a présent la prophylaxie se bornait aux moyens de protection mécanique et chimique: moustiquaire et quinine.

" C'est dire qu'elle ne s'adresse qu'aux individus Européens ou Européanisés et aussi â certains groupements de travailleurs dans les exploitations facilement accessibles et régulièrement visitées.

" Le Plasmodium Praecox est de beaucoup le parasite le plus fréquemmement recontré, le Vivax vient ensuite. Les examens de sang systématiquement pratiqués décèlent le P. Praecox dans au moins 70 pour cent. des cas.

" Le P. Malariae n'a jamais été trouvé.

" Le Tetanos existe dans l'Ile et sa prophylaxie est assurée par le vaccination à l'anatoxine tétanique de tous les Travailleurs Tonkinois débarquant aux Nouvelles-Hébrides.

" 254 Vaccinations de ce type ont été effectuées en 1936.

" La Variole, n'existe pas actuellement dans l'Archipel.

" 107 Vaccinations ont été effectuées en 1936 à Vaté, sur des Travailleurs Tonkinois, Miliciens, Prisonniers, mourrissons, et Enfants des Ecoles.

" La Syphilis, semble peu répandue et dans de nombreuses formes le départ entre cette affection et le Pian est difficile.

" La Lepre, existe, de rares cas sont connus; elle ne paraît pas être aux Nouvelles-Hébrides un danger social.

" La Tuberculose serait assez fréquente d'après les examens cliniques faits par divers médecins en différents postes. Mais il faut bien dire qu'on n'a guère prospecté la population à ce point de vue: aucune enquête tuberculinque n'a jamais été faite—et dans les case particuliers —le diagnostic n'a jamais eu l'assise complémentaire, dans les tuberculoses pulmonaires, du microscope pour la recherche du bacille de Koch ou de la graphie confirmant des lésions parenchymateuses dans les cas douteux à la clinique.

" Les Dysenteries, amibiennes et bacillaires sont fréquentes. Nous avons pu à l'Hôpital Français de Port-Vila, grâce à la séro-agglutination du bacille de Shiga affirmer l'existence aux Nouvelles-Hébrides de la dysenterie bacillaire. Cette affection, épidémique, saisonnière semble fair chaque année de grands ravages dans les Iles du Centre (Epi, Mallicolo, Ambrym, Pentecôte).

" Le Pian, se montre aux Nouvelles-Hébrides assez rebelle à la thérapeutique arsenicale.

" Les traitements insuffisants faits antérieurement, un peu partout dans l'Archipel, expliquent suffisamment cette arséno-résistance.

Medical Institutions.

There are six European doctors, five hospitals, and five medical aid posts in the Group. The location of the hospitals and aid posts is as follows:—

Southern Islands.

Tanna.—A well-equipped hospital run by the Presbyterian Mission, assisted by a grant from British funds. A British medical practitioner is in charge of the hospital. There is also a small French hospital in charge of an officer of the French Medical Service. A leper segregation area is established on Tanna under the auspices of the Condominium Government and treatment is given.

Central Islands.

Efate.—There are two good hospitals at Vila, the John G. Paton Memorial Hospital, administered by the Presbyterian Mission and assisted by a grant from British funds, and the French Government Hospital. These hospitals have trained European staffs and are in the charge of qualified medical officers. The French Government has recently erected a new non-European wing at the French hospital.

Malekula.—There is a French Government hospital at Norsup and a European medical officer is in charge. At Port Sandwich there is a French Government medical aid post.

NORTHERN ISLANDS.

Santo.—The French Government have established a hospital in the Segond Channel, Santo, with a European medical officer in charge and European staff.

There are three medical aid posts belonging to the Melanesian Mission and assisted by a grant from British funds, one on Pentecost and two on Aoba. A hospital is in course of construction at Lolowai, Aoba.

All these institutions are open to the indigenous population as well as to white residents and Asiatics.

The following gives statistics of the New Hebrides hospitals for the year 1936:—

Cases.	*British Hospital Vila*			*French Hospitals (amalgamated).*		
	European.	*Natives and Asiatics.*	*Total.*	*European.*	*Natives and Asiatics.*	*Total.*
In-patients ...	35	297	332	174	1,130	1,304
Out-patients ...	30	1,962	1,992	1,225	15,568	16,793
Total ...	65	2,259	2,324	1,399	16,698	18,097
Deaths ...	1	13	14	2	51	53

Diseases.

Malaria is the principal disease. It is more prevalent in the northern islands than in the southern, owing to the difference in climate and rainfall. and the prevalence of large swampy areas. Amoebic dysentery is endemic throughout the year and epidemic in the hot season. Both these diseases are being combated with success by measures of sanitation. Blackwater fever occurs occasionally among Europeans. The indigenous population suffers chiefly from yaws, hookworm, malaria, and dysentery. The various hospitals in the Group, both Government and missionary, treat the natives for these complaints.

Sanitation.

Sanitation in the islands of the Group is still in the early stages of development but some progress has been made at Vila, the capital, during the past few years. The water supply is rain-water collected into large tanks with which all houses are equipped. This system has the disadvantage of providing breeding places for mosquitoes unless adequately protected or

periodically treated with kerosene oil. On the other hand, it provides a pure source of supply, and cases of water contamination are rare.

All Government houses in Vila are supplied with septic tanks which prove satisfactory, but most residents adopt the pit system of latrine.

Arrangements are made by the Condominium Administration for the disposal of refuse which is destroyed by incineration.

Sanitary legislation provides for the inspection of all meat tendered for human consumption in Vila, and for the inspection of private and public premises.

Periodical inspections of the town of Vila are undertaken by the Sanitary Commission, and a permanent refuse removal squad is responsible for the removal every day of kitchen refuse, etc., and for the cleanliness of the public roads.

A special sanitary squad is charged with anti-mosquito and fly measures; water-tanks and other breeding places are periodically treated with kerosene.

V.—HOUSING.

Houses occupied by Europeans in the Group are usually of the one-storey bungalow type of two or more rooms surrounded by verandahs. They are generally constructed of wood and galvanized iron. Owing to the frequency of earthquake shocks, buildings of brick, stone, or concrete, are not favoured.

In the more civilized areas natives are gradually adapting themselves to European ideas of constructions, and a marked improvement in native dwelling-houses is noticeable in villages adjacent to Vila.

In the outlying islands, mission natives favour dwelling-houses constructed of lime mortar, which is a great improvement on the grass humpy of former days, and far more comfortable and sanitary.

The non-mission or heathen native still clings to the insanitary grass or leaf shelter accommodating the whole of his family, and more often than not his pigs and dogs. But with the gradual advance of civilization, this system is discarded in favour of the more substantial dwellings above-mentioned.

The building of houses, etc., in the town of Vila is governed by the provision of a Town Conservancy Regulation which requires all plans of projected buildings to be passed by a Sanitary Commission.

Under the provisions of the same Regulation, householders are bound to keep their premises in good order, clean, and free of weeds and undergrowth.

VI.—PRODUCTION.

The chief products of the Group are copra, cocoa and coffee. A fair amount of shell and sandalwood is also exported.

The value of copra produced in 1936 was £90,171, that of cocoa £12,026, and that of coffee £13,404.

The values for 1935 and 1936 shown in the production and price tables annexed to Chapter VII are in sterling, the franc values having been converted at the market rate of exchange, whereas from 1931 to 1934 the Protocol rate of 124 francs = £1 was employed for conversion of franc values. No useful deductions, therefore, can be drawn from comparison of those prices and values with those of the previous four years.

Notwithstanding two severe cyclones which passed over the Group in December, 1935, and January, 1936, the substantial increase in copra production noted in 1935 was maintained during 1936, and the 10,000-ton mark was exceeded for the first time since 1931. Coffee and cocoa showed a falling off, particularly cocoa, due to the effects of the cyclone of January, 1936, which practically ruined the crop. The higher average prices realized for copra during 1936 was an incentive to native production, many of whose plantations were unproductive during the depression years.

The price of cotton, once a promising staple product of the New Hebrides, was still so unremunerative as to cause practical cessation of production.

In addition to the above-mentioned articles, small quantities of hides and wool are exported.

A small sheep-station, running some 2,000 to 2,500 sheep, has been successfully operated on the island of Erromanga for some years. Fair prices have been realized for the wool.

A large number of cattle is raised in the Group, but not as an export industry, their chief value being for purposes of keeping down grass on plantations and feeding labourers.

With the exception of copra, of which about one-sixth is produced by native owners of small plots of coconut trees, the products referred to above are grown entirely on European-owned plantations, some of them the property of individual owners, others owned by important companies such as the Société Française des Nouvelles-Hébrides, and Société Cottonière, which have large interests in the Group.

Plantations are worked by British settlers with indigenous labourers partly under contract and partly as free and casual labourers. French settlers employ the same class of labour to a large extent, but they are mainly dependent on Tonkinese coolies imported for French settlers by the French authorities.

At the end of 1936 there were 1,040 Tonkinese and two Javanese coolies (including women and children) in the Group.

The maximum period of contract for indigenous labourers is three years, but with the growing popularity of the casual labour system, these lengthy terms are becoming more and more rare; the native prefers short contracts, or if possible, no contract at all. The usual term of contract for imported Tonkinese coolies is five years.

All native labour is subject to the control of the Administration. Conditions of employment are governed by the labour provisions of the Protocol of 1914. In addition, British settlers are subject to the provisions of separate legislation containing restrictions additional to those provided in the Protocol.

No mining, fishing, or manufacturing industries exist in the Group.

There are no cultivations, plantations, or industries worked or owned by persons of non-European descent, other than those of about a score of Chinese market gardeners in the neighbourhood of the town of Vila, whose produce is all consumed locally.

VII.—COMMERCE.

The New Hebrides soil and climate are excellent for the culture of many tropical products. Planters specialize in copra, cocoa, and coffee. Unfortunately, owing to the lack of scientific methods of preparation and of a system of grading, these products are very irregular in quality, and owing to their indifferent reputation receive a comparatively low price.

Copra prices showed an improvement during the year and this commodity is now a paying proposition. Cocoa and coffee remain depressed. Other prices were maintained at much the same level as 1935.

Other products exported were cotton, trochas and burghaus shell, sandalwood, maize, hides, and bêche-de-mer.

Hides are a by-product of the cattle referred to in the previous section and not an industry, and the quantity exported is negligible. The quantity of bêche-de-mer produced is small and merely a by-product of Japanese trochas fishers. Pearl shell is occasionally found, but only in small quantities. Wool is grown successfully on one of the southern islands, but sheep do not flourish in the northern part of the Group.

There are many good trees such as kauri, island teak, and sandalwood, as well as a variety of hardwoods, but as yet these have been little exploited owing to economic and topographical difficulties.

Oranges, lemons, limes, grapefruit, bananas, pineapples, mangoes and avocada pears, etc., grow in profusion, but none are exported on account of lack of available markets.

Large tracts of fertile land are still untouched.

Exports.

COMPARATIVE TABLE IN TONS AND STERLING.

	1929.		1930.‡		1931.‡		1932.‡		1933.‡		1934.‡		1935.		1936.‡	
	Tons.	*Value.*	*Tons.*	*Value.*	*Tons.*	*Value.*	*Tons.*	*Value.*	*Tons.*	*Value.*	*Tons.*	*Value.*	*Tons.*	*Value.*	*Tons.*	*Value.*
		£ *		£ *		£ *		£ *		£ *		£ *		£ §		£ †
Copra	10,787	147,460	11,883	130,573	10,005	69,886	7,032	36,306	7,045	23,864	6,939	14,886	9,859	61,783	10,424	90,171
Cocoa	2,047	89,088	2,265	73.444	1,505	31,435	1,728	27,967	1,893	28,745	1,728	19,512	2,672	42,047	891	12,026
Coffee	100	6,530	125	7,892	131	5,712	213	6,571	433	13,937	318	9,624	366	19,367	307	13,404
Cotton	329	31,700	480	26,880	387	9,833	189	3,277	62	1,084	19	307	33	966	25	713
Trochas and Burghaus Shell	57	2,980	55	2,721	102	2,053	112	1,768	110	1,782	130	2,970	98	3,594	106	3,381
Maize...	482	4,355	455	3,670	52	298	99	400	35	143	43	209	106	283	1	1
Sandalwood	49	957	98	1,978	24	492	69	1,146	61	941	100	1,446	66	1,704	81	1,656
Wool	8	963	16	1,257	9	412	4	170	9	436	9	441	6	515	4	232
Cotton Seed ...	657	1,060	476	591	1,063	1,286	411	497	128	121	—	—	—	—	—	—
Hides...	—	—	—	—	22	349	17	135	21	172	28	273	23	287	32	302
Castor Oil Seed ...	—	—	—	—	21	121	4	22	52	172	29	72	17	69	—	—
Coconuts	—	—	—	—	61	182	107	289	79	185	94	133	40	91	43	120
Bêche de mer ...	—	—	—	—	9	104	1	13	18	236	3	39	2	43	1	24
Miscellaneous ...	643	1,139	607	1,514	276	30	28	40	97	21	200	21	136	188	64	38
Totals	15,159	286,232	16,460	250,520	13,667	122,193	10,014	78,601	10,043	71,839	9,587	49,933	13,423	130,937	11,979	122,068

* Converted at 124 francs = £1. § Converted at 75 francs = £1. † Converted at 83 francs = £1.

‡ In these years exports were unfavourably affected by cyclones.

COMPARATIVE TABLE OF PRICES OF RAW PRODUCE.

(Per metric ton.)

	1931. (a)	1932. (a)	1933. (a)	1934. (a)	1935. (b)	1936. (c)
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Copra	7	5	3·4	2·15	6·25	8·65
Coffee	35	30	32	32	53	45
Cocoa	21	16	15	11·3	15·6	13·5
Cotton	25	17	18	18	29·35	28·5
Maize	5·7	4	4	5	2·65	—
Trochas	24	20	20	28	43	45
Burghaus	10	8	6	6	10	10·6
Wool	47	42	47	68	94	66

(a) Converted at 124 francs = £1.
(b) Converted at 75 francs = £1.
(c) Converted at 83 francs = £1.

Copra showed an improvement in production and price, and native production showed no falling off compared with the previous year.

Coffee, cocoa, cotton and wool declined in value.

The share of produce exported, as British by British firms and planters was 6·21 per cent. and 6·18 per cent. for tonnage and value respectively.

Imports.

COMPARATIVE TABLE OF IMPORT VALUES.

Year.	*British currency*	*French currency.*	*Remarks.*
	£	Francs.	Converted at francs.
1924	92,201	7,929,327	86 = £
1925	217,863	22,004,232	101 = £
1926	197,840	30,457,405	154 = £
1927	307,939	38,184,562	124 = £
1928	373,797	46,474,828	124 = £
1929	300,035	37,204,343	124 = £
1930	157,541	19,535,138	124 = £
1931	79,997	9,919,635	124 = £
1932	81,587	10,116,807	124 = £
1933	85,544	10,607,515	124 = £
1934	75,993	9,423,132	124 = £
1935	115,492	8,661,951	75 = £
1936	123,800	10,056,000	83 = £

COMPARATIVE TABLE OF CHIEF IMPORTS.

	1931. (a)	1932. (a)	1933. (a)	1934. (a)	1935. (b)	1936. (c)
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Beer	1,150	1,574	1,240	1,277	1,638	1,060
Benzine (petrol) ...	3,238	3,288	3,741	2,024	2,148	2,639
Biscuits	780	385	496	568	953	728
Tinned goods and groceries ...	2,720	1,603	1,508	1,164	1,766	3,152
Cartridges ...	280	240	247	284	153	327
Tobacco	5,545	4,466	5,140	3,819	5,126	4,997
Cement	780	599	536	1,018	1,311	700
Lubricating Oils ...	1,285	273	1,606	1,570	3,230	959
Spirits	1,635	2,569	1,590	1,845	3,369	1,779
Tinned milk ...	1,050	879	943	759	1,208	908
Kerosene	2,520	2,340	3,329	1,323	1,814	1,712
Rice	11,254	7,325	4,467	3,335	6,737	9,450
Flour	2,815	2,164	2,143	2,040	3,472	3,317
Sugar	1,610	1,570	1,259	1,316	2,111	2,000
Soap	843	613	575	416	517	775
Tinned fish ...	1,180	462	1,850	590	1,212	1,766
Wines (fine) ...	1,010	1,424	1,000	511	637	706
Wines (ordinaire)	4,096	2,493	2,817	1,909	3,092	2,135
Gunny bags ...	4,857	3,688	4,166	2,084	3,175	4,150
Building materials	3,561	3,953	5,701	3,023	6,774	4,512
Agricultural machinery, boats, motor cars ...	674	793	2,189	3,796	8,445	5,869
Potatoes	456	347	298	351	566	624
Tea	1,240	789	1,190	800	1,089	1,030

(a) Converted at 124 francs = £1.
(b) Converted at 75 francs = £1.
(c) Converted at 83 francs = £1.

The values of imports for 1935 and 1936 cannot be compared with those for 1931 to 1934, as the conversion rate in these latter years was the Protocol rate of 124 francs=£1, while in 1935 the bank rate of exchange was adopted and has been continued since. The total sterling value of imports in 1936 was £123,800.

The largest share of the import trade went to Australia which accounted for slightly over 70 per cent. as against 48 per cent. of the previous year. All other countries showed a falling off, in particular France and French Colonies and the United States of America, whose shares were 15·68 per cent. and 1·68 per cent. respectively as against 21 per cent. and 12·25 per cent. in 1935. Imports by British firms and individuals totalled 21 per cent. of the total.

Shares of trade of supplying countries were:—

	£	*Per cent.*
United Kingdom	2,768	2·25
Australia	87,392	70·50
Hong Kong	1,687	1·33
France and French Colonies	19,314	15·66
United States of America	2,096	1·66
Japan	6,371	5·25
Dutch Indies	2,007	1·66
Various	2,165	1·75

The principal importing firms are: British—Messrs. Burns Philip (South Sea) Company, Limited; French—Les Comptoirs Français des Nouvelles-Hébrides, Messrs. Gubbay Frères, and La Société Commerciale Française des Iles Françaisés du Pacifique.

Three steamers were employed in the inter-island trade. Of these, two, one British and one French, carry a trade room, where the settler is able to purchase most of his requirements and dispose of his produce, whilst the other (French) forms part of the Messageries Maritimes fleet and confines itself to the freighting of cargo and the transport of passengers. In addition there are a number of small trading craft operating, some of which are native-owned.

There are four large stores in Vila, one of which is British. In addition there are numerous small shops in the hands of French, Japanese and Chinese traders. There are two stores at Segond Channel, Santo, both French.

During the year under review the improvement in the general trading outlook was maintained owing to the more remunerative price of copra. Not only was more copra made by natives but the natives again began to buy comparatively freely.

VIII.—WAGES AND COST OF LIVING.

Labour and Wages.

Native Labour.

Native labour may be divided into three main classes:—

(*a*) Plantation labour, boats' crews of local small vessels, employees of traders, Government messengers, Constabulary, etc., on contract and otherwise;

(*b*) domestic labour;

(*c*) casual labour, working on steamers, wharves, Government works, etc.

The tendency to employ " free labour " (not under contract) is increasing except in the case of certain plantations which have difficulty in obtaining labour near at hand. The growth of a " free " labour market is a satisfactory feature as it has a tendency to bring the wages and treatment of labour into more

exact relationship with prices. It is doubtful, however, if certain plantations would ever be able to be run without a few contracted men at least to ensure the proper harvesting of certain seasonal crops.

In consequence of the cost of introduction of Tonkinese, French employers have been recruiting natives freely.

The native's aversion to long-term engagements is as pronounced as ever; he prefers to work without engagement if possible and will not usually bind himself for more than twelve months.

By nature the native of the New Hebrides is lazy and of mercurial temperament. He will not work unless circumstances compel him. His wants are less simple than formerly, as he has become accustomed to European food and clothing. When times are good labour is exceedingly scarce and dear, as the majority of natives can obtain all they want by the sale of the produce of their lands, and with a minimum of exertion. When times are bad, the point arrives when the native, having exhausted his hoarded savings, cannot, without a very great deal of exertion himself, obtain the luxuries he desires. He is then faced with the choice of work on his own account, which is unpalatable, or, on the other hand, with either reverting to his natural state in the matter of food (of which there is plenty) and clothing, or working for wages.

Domestic labour remains by comparison difficult to secure, as neither the male nor the female native takes kindly to this form of service and can rarely be prevailed upon to stay with an employer for an extended period.

During the year the current rates of wages were:—

Class (a)—	
Plantation labourers Boats' Crews Traders' employees	10s. to £1 10s. 0d. per month with food and clothing, whether under engagement or not, generally together with piece-work.
Government messengers	£3 per month without food.
Constabulary	From £2 per month with food and clothing.

Note.—Local or casual labour is frequently employed on plantations for picking cotton and seasonal crops on a daily wage from 1s. to 2s. with or without food, according to arrangement.

Class (b)—	
Domestic labour	£1 to £2 per month with food and clothing, whether engaged or not.

Class (*c*)—

Casual labour, other than plantation	2s. to 4s. per day with or without food and according to skill.

The employment of natives under engagement of any kind is governed by the provisions of the Protocol of 1914, and, in the case of British dependants, also by national legislation.

ASIATIC LABOUR.

Asiatic labour consists of:—

(*a*) Indo-Chinese coolies introduced into the territory by the French Government under contract, for employment by French settlers. These Tonkinese are, generally speaking, satisfactory, being of a superior intelligence to the natives, if not physically so strong. They are naturally hard-workers and receive approximately 100 francs a month, plus food, clothing, lodging, etc. The cost to the settler is higher than that of the native labourer as, in addition to wages, he has to bear the cost of transportation to and from Indo-China, Government inspection and medical surveillance, etc. At the end of the year, 1,040 remained.

(*b*) Free Chinese and Japanese labour of the artisan class. These are very few, and work on a day-to-day basis at wages varying according to skill and the demand for labour. Such wages very from 5s. to 15s. a day. There are also a few Chinese employed as stewards, cooks, and firemen on inter-island steamers at rates varying from £4 to £10 per month with rations.

Cost of Living.

The maintenance of a good standard of living among European residents is an important factor for the preservation of health and an equitable mental outlook, and it is desirable that it should be as high as circumstances permit. The general standard of European living is good. At Vila, the capital of the Group, living is more expensive than in other parts as facilities for maintaining vegetable gardens and livestock are less. Market gardening is carried out by the Chinese community and under normal conditions green vegetables can be obtained during seven to nine months of the year. The supply is unreliable, being at times in excess of local requirements and at other times the reverse. Fresh meat of fair quality is obtainable from the local butchers, and arrangements for supplies of fresh milk can be made. Fish is difficult to obtain and the quality is tropical. The stores maintain supplies of clothing, hosiery, boots, etc., but it is more desirable for wearing apparel to be obtained from Australia or Europe. Nearly all perishable food commodities are imported from Australia with the exception of rice and sugar, of which a proportion is imported from Indo-China and Java.

The cost of living in the islands of the Group away from Vila is cheaper and generally more satisfactory; all European residents outside Vila are able to maintain vegetable gardens and livestock and thus provide themselves with eggs, milk, butter, poultry and meat. The periodical visits of the island vessels supply them with such other commodities as they require.

The following table gives the average retail prices in the town of Vila during 1936:—

Fresh milk...	6d. to 8d. per quart.
Flour	2d. to 2½d. per lb.
Rice	1½d. to 3d. per lb.
Sugar	2½d. to 5d. per lb.
Potatoes	2d. to 3d. per lb.
Fresh meat	8d. to 2s. per lb.
Onions	3d. per lb.
Butter	1s. 10d. to 2s. 3d. per lb.
Tea	3s. 3d. to 4s. per lb.
Coffee	1s. 6d. to 3s. per lb.
Eggs	2s. 6d. to 4s. per dozen.
Poultry	4s. to 10s. each.
Tinned meat	1s. 3d. to 2s. 6d. per lb.
Wood fuel	4s. to 10s. per cubic metre.
Kerosene	7s. 6d. to 8s. 6d. per tin (4 gallons).
Petrol	7s. 6d. to 8s. 6d. per tin (4 gallons).

IX.—EDUCATION AND WELFARE INSTITUTIONS.

There are no schools controlled or supported by the Condominium Government, nor are there any facilities for European children to receive anything but a primary education, which is not of a very high standard.

The town of Vila has three schools: (1) a school for girls, supported and controlled by the Sisters of the Sacret Heart Mission; (2) a boys school, supported and controlled by the Marist Mission; and (3) an infants' school run by the French Government. There is also a mixed primary school at Segond Channel, Santo, under the auspices of the Marist Mission. Admission to these schools is not restricted to the children of Europeans and the entrance fees are purely nominal.

The British and French Missions in the Group have various good schools and training institutions for the benefit of the natives. The Presbyterian Mission maintains a good school at Tangoa, South Santo, for the training of mission teachers, and can accommodate up to sixty pupils. They also maintain mission schools throughout the Group. The Melanesian Mission

have two good schools at Lolowai, Aoba, one for native girls and one for native boys. The Seventh Day Adventist Mission have an utilitarian school at Aore Island, Santo, which is equipped with modern machinery for teaching all kinds of woodcraft. The Marist Mission also maintains schools in various islands of the Group.

All these institutions carry out excellent work among the natives and deserve commendation.

The task of educating the New Hebridean has been left in the hands of the various Mission bodies operating in the Group; but in order to appreciate the inestimable services rendered by these Missions in educating and civilizing the wild inhabitants of these islands, a short sketch of missionary endeavour will be of assistance.

The island of Erromanga was the scene of the first essay to wean the native from heathenism, when in the year 1839 John Williams and Harris, under the auspices of the London Missionary Society, landed at Dillon's Bay, and in the same year were killed by the natives for whose welfare they strove.

It was not until 1857 that any further attempt was made to bring civilization to the Erromangans. In that year the Reverend G. N. and Mrs. Gordon took up the work, but were subsequently murdered by the natives, to be followed by Gordon's brother, who perished in the same manner. The Gordons were followed by Mr. and Mrs. McNair. Mr. McNair died on the island and was followed by the Reverend Doctor Robertson, who, after many years of danger and hardship, had the satisfaction of seeing the whole island under the civilizing influence of Christianity when he left the Group in 1920.

Erromanga is well named " The Martyrs' Isle ".

In 1842 an endeavour was made by Messrs. Turner and Nisbet to convert the Tannese, but their efforts were not attended with success, and after a few months they were forced to flee, barely escaping with their lives. Sixteen years later the Reverend Doctor J. G. Paton took up the work on Tanna but, owing to the hostility of the natives, was compelled to abandon the island after four years. He settled on the adjacent island of Aniwa, where his efforts were attended with every success. Tanna was afterwards occupied by the Reverend Mr. Watt and the Reverend Mr. Neilson, whose work materially contributed to the subjugation of the warlike Tannese.

About the year 1850 the control of the missions passed into the charge of the various Presbyterian Church bodies in the Colonies, and in later years the more northern islands of the Group were endowed with missionaries. The following names figure prominently in the list of those devoted men and women who in the early days braved the hardships and dangers of this Group in the task of claiming its inhabitants for civilization: The Reverend Mr. Milne of Nguna; Doctors Mackenzie and

Macdonald of Efate; Michelsen of Tongoa; Smail and Fraser of Epi; Morton and Watt-Leggatt of Malekula; Annand and Mackenzie of Santo.

Other workers in the New Hebrides mission-field include the Catholic, Melanesian, Church of Christ, and Seventh Day Adventist denominations.

The Catholic Mission was first established on the island of Aneityum in the year 1848, but their stay was not of long duration and the attempt was soon abandoned. They returned to the Group, however, in 1887, and since that date their influence has gradually extended to the whole Group with the exception of the southern islands, and the Banks and Torres. The year 1933, however, saw the establishment by the Marist Mission of a post on the island of Tanna in the southern portion of the Group.

The Melanesian Mission was in the field about the year 1850, and by agreement with the Presbyterian Missions the northern part of the Group, comprising Aoba, Pentecost, Maeovo, and the Banks and Torres, as yet untouched by the Presbyterians, was abandoned as a Melanesian Mission sphere of influence.

It was on Aoba Island in the year 1905 that the Reverend Mr. Godden of this Mission, the latest of mission martyrs at native hands, was brutally murdered by a native of that island.

In 1912 the Seventh Day Adventists started operations on Efate, but later transferred their activities to Ambrym, Malekula, Aoba and Santo, and in 1932 to Tanna.

In the task of civilizing the native the importance of education was never lost sight of. Each mission village has its school, where the rudiments of reading and writing are imparted to young and old. To-day there are four good central schools, in addition to the mission station schools, where facilities are provided for primary education of the native. Of these the Training Institution established many years ago by the Presbyterian Mission at Tangoa renders excellent services in fashioning from the raw material teachers in whose care is confided the task of education. Another invaluable institution of this nature is the Melanesian Mission school on Aoba. The Catholic Mission school at Vila also renders good services in this direction. The year 1925 saw the Seventh Day Adventists installed on the island of Aore, where natives from all parts of the Group in addition to their scholastic studies, receive practical instruction in various arts and crafts.

Apart from the good educational work achieved by the missions, there is the equally important and beneficial medical work undertaken by the Presbyterian Mission, about which much could be written. A few years ago this denomination maintained no less than four well-equipped hospitals in the Group. To-day there are two, one at Tanna and the other at Vila. These hospitals are primarily intended for native patients,

but their services are no less appreciated by white sufferers. The hospital established at Dip Point, Ambrym, under the superintendence of Doctor Bowie, to whose skill and kindness not only hundreds of natives but many Europeans alive to-day owe their lives, will always be remembered in connexion with missionary endeavour in this Group. This hospital, in the year 1913, was engulfed, together with the adjoining mission station and native villages, in the tremendous volcanic outburst on that island, and to-day, where the hospital stood, is nothing but a shallow lake.

The mission hospital at Vila was opened in 1912, and is a well-appointed building standing in the small island of Iririki in Vila Harbour.

Tanna hospital has been in existence over 25 years and its beneficial services are well known and appreciated by all.

The Melanesian Mission has established on the islands of Aoba and Pentecost, medical aid posts staffed by fully qualified nursing sisters who render valuable assistance to native sufferers in their areas.

Many missionaries of all denominations have been trained in simple medicine and in the giving of injections. They give splendid service in the combating of native diseases such as yaws, hookworm and malaria, and in the sanitary and hygienic education of the native.

X.—COMMUNICATIONS AND TRANSPORT.

Shipping.

Europe.—A two-monthly service of the Messageries Maritimes Line is maintained between the terminal of Dunkirk and Noumea (New Caledonia), via Vila, on both inward and outward voyages. The route is via Tahiti, Panama, Martinique, and Marseilles, and the period of the voyage approximately 53 days between Vila and Marseilles.

Australia.—The s.s. *Morinda* (Burns Philp Line) and the s.s. *Pierre Loti* (Messageries Maritimes) maintain respectively six-weekly and periodical communications with Sydney, New South Wales, the former via Norfolk Island and Lord Howe Island on the outward and homeward voyages, from Sydney and the latter via Lifou, Loyalty Islands, and Noumea, New Caledonia. The s.s. *Pierre Loti* also maintains a service with Indo-China and Hong Kong.

Dutch Line.—A regular service is also maintained by the Royal Packet Navigation (K.P.M.) Company's vessel *Maetsuycker* between Saigon and Noumea, New Zealand and Sydney, touching at Vila about every two months via Batavia, Papua and New Guinea.

New Caledonia.—Periodical communication is maintained with Noumea by the s.s. *Pierre Loti* and by the Messageries Maritimes line of steamers previously mentioned, approximately every two months. The French inter-island steamers also pay occasional visits to Noumea.

Inter-Island.—The following steamers make periodical voyages round the Group. They have no fixed itinerary but usually connect at Vila with the French or British mail vessels:—

s.s. *Mirani* (Burns Philp (South Sea) Company Limited) and s.s. *Bucephale* (Messageries Maritimes).

The port of Vila is the port of entry in the Group. The tonnage entered and cleared during 1936 was as follows:—

Entered.

	Tons.	
British	19,871	(14 vessels).
French	122,711	(35 vessels).
Other	11,092	(8 vessels).
	153,674	

Cleared.

	Tons.	
British	19,871	(14 vessels).
French	124,445	(35 vessels).
Other	11,092	(8 vessels).
	155,408	

Ports.

Vessels of any size can enter the Port of Vila, but the number of anchorages for large vessels is limited. All loading and discharging is carried out in lighters, as the wharves and jetties at Vila are not suitable for vessels exceeding 100 tons.

Railways.

There are no railways in the Group. The small wharves, privately-owned by the commercial houses in Vila, are provided with rails for the transport on trolleys of merchandise and produce to and from the bulk store sheds.

Posts.

Mail communication from and to Europe and Australia is maintained by the mail steamers s.s. *Morinda* every six weeks, and s.s. *Pierre Loti* periodically, both of which call at Vila and various island ports. These lines are subsidized by His Majesty's Government in the Commonwealth of Australia and

the French Government respectively. The mails, both inward and outward, are sorted at Vila and re-bagged for distribution round the Group by the inter-island steamers, which receive a grant from the Condominium Government for the services performed. The average time for European postal matter to reach Vila by the regular mail routes is 42 to 49 days. The Condominium Government has a postage stamp issue designed to represent the dual control. There are two series of stamps —one British and one French. Both are inscribed in English and French currency. This issue will shortly be replaced by a new issue. Correspondence by airmail from Sydney to all parts of the world is accepted by the Condominium Post Office.

The postal matter handled by the Vila Post Office for 1936 was as follows:—

	From or to British territory.		*From or to French territory.*		*From or to other places.*		*Totals.*
	Received.	*Despatched.*	*Received.*	*Despatched.*	*Received.*	*Despatched.*	
Letters	24,000	20,000	50,000	36,000	5,000	4,000	139,000
Other articles ...	45,400	3,050	31,600	3,020	900	810	84,780
Registered articles	760	1,620	2,600	2,800	100	250	8,130
Air Mail articles	10	80	150	680	—	140	1,060
Totals ...	70,170	24,750	84,350	42,500	6,000	5,200	232,970

Radio-Telegraph.

Communication with the New Hebrides is by radio-telegraph. The Condominium Government maintains a station at Vila. The station is powered at 1½ kilowatts and the call sign is FJX. Reception and transmission are carried out on wavelengths of 17 to 40 metres and 21 to 37 metres respectively and also on the 600 and 800 metre bands. A daily service is maintained with the station at Suva, Fiji (VPD and VRP), and with the French Government station at Noumea, New Caledonia (FJP). Severe static interferes with the service on the intermediate bands during the hot and rainy season from November to April. The terminal charge of the Vila station is 3d. per word (minimum charge 1s 6d.). The rate per word for telegrams despatched from Vila to Australia and the United Kingdom is as follows:—

To	*Ordinary.*	*Code.*	*Deferred.*	*D.L.T.*	*X.L.T.*
Australia ...	1s.	8d.	—	—	8d.
United Kingdom	2s. 2d.	1s. 4d.	1s. 1d.	9d. (Minimum charge of 25 words).	9d. (Minimum charge of 10 words).

The traffic handled by the Station during the year under report was as follows:—

Class.	*Words received.*	*Words despatched.*
Official	18,127	22,606
Official Relayed	26	—
Ordinary Private	6,117	4,253
Ordinary Relayed	4,131	—
Code	11,462	13,220
Code Relayed	4,343	—
L.C.	676	619
L.C. Relayed	533	—
D.L.T.	196	286
D.L.T. Relayed	53	—
X.L.T.	69	40
X.L.T. Relayed	30	—
Total	45,763	41,024

Total words received and despatched = 86,787.

There is a privately-owned wireless station at Norsup, Malekula, and another at the Segond Channel, Santo. These stations communicate with Vila and with inter-island shipping.

Roads.

With the exception of the islands of Efate, Tanna, and Tongoa, there are very few public highways in the Group suitable for wheeled transport. Tanna has several good roads, one of which traverses the island. There is also a fair road on the island of Tongoa. Vila, the capital and seat of Government, has several roads and these link up with the outlying districts.

Telephones.

Telephone communication is established in the town of Vila and the outlying districts. The system is operated by a central exchange and the service is continuous. There are 62 telephones and 96 miles of wire. During the hurricane season the service is liable to interruption. There are no telephone systems in the other islands of the Group. The annual subscription rate is £4 (unlimited calls).

XI.—BANKING, CURRENCY, WEIGHTS AND MEASURES.

There are no banks in the New Hebrides. The Condominium Government carries out its banking operations through Noumea (New Caledonia) and Sydney (Australia). It has been the practice in the past for the larger British and French commercial houses at Vila to act as bankers for their clients, but depressed conditions have severely restricted these operations. The Banque de l'Indo-chine, at Noumea, issues a local note which circulates in the New Hebrides and is guaranteed by the Bank of France.

The currency circulating in the New Hebrides Group are sterling, Australian, and French currency; sterling and francs being legal tender. Australian currency is accepted at the prevailing discount rate against sterling. Sterling is becoming increasingly rare.

Australian currency is the chief medium of commerce throughout the Group. The average rates of exchange during the year for sterling and Australian money in relation to the franc were: pound sterling=83 francs, and pound Australian=67 francs. The British and French systems of weights and measures are both employed throughout the Group.

XII.—PUBLIC WORKS.

The Condominium maintains a Public Works Department normally controlled by a Superintendent and an Assistant.

In normal times building material is mostly imported from Australia. Dwelling-houses and other buildings are all made of wood and galvanized iron owing to the prevalence of earth tremors.

The construction and maintenance of roads and bridges is carried out partly by the Public Works Department and partly by local contract under Public Works supervision. Semi-metalled roads exist in Efate for a few miles round Vila. There are unmetalled or semi-metalled roads in various parts of the Group, the best being those in the islands of Tanna and Tongoa, which have been made by the natives themselves to facilitate the cartage of produce to the beaches. Such roads are comparatively easy of construction as the underlying hard coral is generally close to the surface and thus cartage of material is minimized. The chief difficulty in maintaining roads is the keeping down of bush.

The use of motor vehicles, and in some islands ox-waggons, has increased the importance of road construction. Most plantations now keep motor transport for their own use and maintain very fair motorways within their own boundaries. These frequently link up with similar roads on adjoining properties. In this manner most of the existing roads (now maintained by the Condominium) have come into being and it is probable that public roads and island arteries of the future will be similarly evolved.

The Public Works Department also maintains the harbour light system of Vila Harbour. This consists of an automatic lighthouse on Pango Point, which guides vessels to the mouth of Vila Harbour, and a pair of leading lights on the hills above the harbour which give a line to the deep-water entrance. A green light shows the lateral margin of safety for large ships. Pango lighthouse was rebuilt, and the mechanism of the leading lights of Vila Harbour was renewed during 1934.

XIII.—JUSTICE, POLICE, AND PRISONS.

Justice.

The Convention of 1914 provided for the immediate introduction of three Courts, namely the Joint Court and the French and British National Courts and the subsequent formation of two others—Courts of First Instance and Native Courts.

The scope and functions of these Courts is briefly as follows:—

(1) *Joint Court.*—The Court is composed of a British and a French Judge, with a President of neutral nationality. There is also a Public Prosecutor and a Native Advocate. The Joint Court is a Court of final adjudication in matters of purely Condominium nature. Broadly speaking, and subject to certain exceptions, its civil jurisdiction is confined to certain proceedings in respect of rights over immovable property—its chief function being that of a land Court governing the registration of indefeasible titles to land. It may also settle cases between any parties, native or non-native, brought before it by consent of both. Its criminal jurisdiction, broadly speaking, is confined to offences—(*a*) connected with the recruitment of native labourers, or (*b*) committed by natives against non-natives, or (*c*) committed by natives against natives in areas where the Native Code is in force and involving a penalty of over one year's confinement, or (*d*) against the Convention, or Joint Regulations passed in pursuance thereof, in areas where no Court of First Instance exists.

There is an appeal to the Joint Court from all judgments of Courts of First Instance and from important civil judgments of Native Courts. The Joint Court also has certain revisionary powers in criminal cases of Native Courts, and judgments of Courts of First Instance involving sentence of imprisonment.

(2) *Courts of First Instance.*—The composition of these Courts consists of a British and a French District Agent with a British or French Assessor chosen by lot. Their jurisdiction is over breaches of the 1914 Convention, or of Joint Regulations made thereunder, except those connected with the recruitment of native labour.

(3) *Native Courts.*—These are composed of either a British or French District Agent, assisted by two native Assessors. The British and French Agents preside over the Courts in turn, month and month about. A necessary corollary to the full and complete functioning of these Courts is the promulgation in the area of the Native Code.

(4) and (5) *National Courts.*—The British and French Governments have established in the Group, in conformity with their existing legal systems, Courts with jurisdiction over all civil cases, other than those reserved to the Joint Court, and over all criminal cases in which a non-native is the defendant. In civil cases the jurisdiction over actions between non-natives belongs in some cases to the Court of the Power under whose

law the contract was concluded, or the act or thing in question originated, and in other cases to the Court of the Power to which the defendant belongs. In criminal cases, non-natives are justiciable by the Court of their own nationality or the nationality applied to them.

Courts of First Instance have so far been set up in Central Districts Nos. 1 and 2 and the Northern District.

A Code of Native Criminal Law has been instituted and two Native Courts—one in the Central District No. 1 and one in the Southern District—have been formed to administer Penal Law only within their competence and jurisdiction.

The following judgments, other than civil, were recorded by the various Courts:—

	Nature of Judgment.	
	Fine.	*Imprisonment.*
Joint Court	—	—
Courts of First Instance	38	2
Native Courts	32	44
Resident Commissioner's Courts ...	17	24
British National Court	—	—
	—	—
Totals	87	70
	—	—

Police.

The policing of the Group is carried out by two separate forces of armed Native Constabulary, British and French, each in the charge of a National Commandant under the orders of the respective Resident Commissioners. The headquarters are at Vila, and small detachments are located at the District Agencies on the islands of Tanna, Malekula, and Santo, respectively, in order to assist the District Agents in the carrying out of their duties.

The British force is composed of natives recruited from the islands of the New Hebrides, and the French force mainly of New Hebrideans with a few Loyalty Islanders. In addition, the French have enrolled a number of Tonkinese police for the purpose of facilitating police operations among the Tonkinese coolies in the Group.

The duties of the Native Constabulary consist in the maintenance of law and order among the native population of the more civilized areas, general police and patrol work, the guarding of native prisoners, and the repression of native disorders.

Both the British and French Commandants, in addition to their duties as Police Officers of the Condominium, also act as Police Officers in so far as their own nationals are concerned, and are charged with the conduct of police cases before their respective National Courts.

The cost of the maintenance of the two forces is defrayed by the respective national Governments, except when the two corps are acting jointly, when the expenses are met from Condominium funds.

The usual term of enlistment for natives of the Group is two years. Some re-engage for further terms. The civilizing influence of the period spent under discipline, combined with the regular food and regular hours of work, is an important factor in the lives of these natives; when they return to their homes they have acquired a certain knowledge of, and respect for, the law and white man's justice which cannot fail to be of assistance to them and their fellow islanders in their everyday life and their relations with Europeans.

Prisons.

Each Government maintains its own national prison, which is situated in the town of Vila, and accommodation is provided for both natives and whites. The cost of maintenance of prisoners sentenced by the national tribunals is met from national funds, and that of natives sentenced by the Resident Commissioners and the Native and Mixed Courts, from Condominium funds.

There is no Condominium prison staff. Each Commandant acts as prison keeper and is responsible for the supervision of prisoners placed in his charge. He is assisted by police constables who act as warders.

In addition to the national prisons at headquarters, each District Agency is provided with a temporary lock-up in which natives under short sentences are confined.

The class of native prisoner with which the Administration is called upon to deal is almost exclusively confined to those sentenced for breaches of local liquor laws and offenders against the provisions of the Native Penal Code.

Native Prisoners are employed on works of general utility, such as the making and cleaning of roads, weeding Government paddocks, transport of material to various Government buildings, etc.

The daily average of native prisoners confined in the British prison was 10 and in the French prison 12·25. No deaths occurred in the British prison. Generally speaking, the health of prisoners was good.

XIV.—LEGISLATION.

The following legislative acts came into force during the year:—

(*a*) Joint Regulation No. 1 of 1936. Suspends for one year obligation to procure a permit to purchase liquor.

(*b*) Joint Regulation No. 2 of 1936. Brings into effect economic sanctions in respect of Italian territories.

(*c*) Joint Regulation No. 3 of 1936. To prevent the introduction of Anthrax.

(*d*) Joint Regulation No. 4 of 1936. Repeals Joint Regulation No. 2 of 1936.

(*e*) Joint Regulation No. 5 of 1936. Provides for disposal of animals suffering from tetanus.

XV.—PUBLIC FINANCE AND TAXATION.

By Article 5 of the Convention of 1914 each of the two Powers is required to defray the expenses of its own Administration in the Group. The cost of the joint services is defrayed out of local taxation. The joint services include finance, posts and telegraphs, customs, public works, ports and harbours, public health, the Joint Court and the Summary Courts and Lands Registry. In the event of revenue from local taxation proving insufficient to meet jointly approved expenditure, the two Signatory Powers contribute the deficit in equal proportions. From 1921 to 1930 the Condominium was self-supporting, but owing to the falling off in revenue, due to the general commercial depression, contributions were required in the years 1931, 1932, 1933, 1934 and 1935 from each Government. No contribution was required during 1936.

Revenue and Expenditure.

CONDOMINIUM REVENUE.

Year.	*French currency.* Fcs.		*British currency.* £	*Remarks.* Converted at Fcs.
1927	3,037,711	or	24,497	124 = £1
1928	3,463,551	or	27,932	124 = £1
1929	3,549,562	or	28,624	124 = £1
1930	2,402,829	or	19,378	124 = £1
1931	1,592,941	or	12,846	124 = £1
1932	1,242,635	or	10,021	124 = £1
1933	1,379,644	or	11,126	124 = £1
1934	1,329,249	or	10,719	124 = £1
1935	—	or	23,008	75 = £1
1936	—	or	22,220	105 = £1

CONDOMINIUM EXPENDITURE.

Year.	*French currency.* Fcs.		*British currency.* £	*Remarks.* Converted at Fcs.
1927	2,220,479	or	17,907	124 = £1
1928	3,568,404	or	28,777	124 = £1
1929	3,210,639	or	25,892	124 = £1
1930	3,509,011	or	28,298	124 = £1
1931	3,013,698	or	24,304	124 = £1
1932	2,455,448	or	19,802	124 = £1
1933	2,358,346	or	19,019	124 = £1
1934	2,884,240	or	23,362	124 = £1
1935	—	or	26,102	75 = £1
1936	—	or	21,866	105 = £1

The chief sources of Condominium revenue are import and export taxes and port dues, which normally account for some four-fifths of the receipts. Other sources of income are postal and telegraphic receipts, Court fees and fines, survey fees, trading licences, taxes on vehicles, Lands Registry fees, and miscellaneous receipts.

The following is a brief table of the principal import duties current during the year:—

General merchanise, unspecified	12 per cent. *ad valorem.*
Gramophones, records, perfumery, lace, rifles, revolvers, and cartidges	20 ,, ,, ,,
Spirits	30 ,, ,, ,,
Tobacco...	50 ,, ,, ,,
Wines	5 to 12 ,, ,, ,,
Petrol, lubricating and combustible oils ...	10 ,, ,, ,,
Kerosene	6 ,, ,, ,,
Shotguns and cartridges, detonators... ...	100 ,, ,, ,,
Beer	1s. per gallon.
Dynamite	1s. 10d. per lb.
Fuse	6d. per 24 feet.

No duty is levied on the following articles:—official uniforms and robes, livestock, books, cereals and seeds, ship's biscuit, coal, fertilizers, medical appliances and drugs for hospitals, microscopes, plants, vaccines and lymphs, fresh vegetables and fruit.

The main heads of taxation and actual yields for the year 1936 are tabulated as follows:—

	£
Inland Revenue (trading and other licences) ...	845
Post Office	774
Port Dues	846
Court and Survey fees	388
Import duties	15,575
Export duties	1,413
Wireless telegraph (gross)	1,123
Lands Registry	313

EXPENDITURE ON SERVICES ENTIRELY BRITISH.

	£
1927-28	16,048
1928-29	11,966
1929-30	9,506
1930-31	10,314
1931-32	9,540
1932-33	9,106
1933-34	8,615
1934-35	9,346
1935-36	9,422
1936-37	9,586

This expenditure is defrayed from funds provided by Parliament on Civil Estimates, Vote for Colonial and Middle Eastern Services, Class II, (9). Certain miscellaneous receipts, such as Court fees and fines, and rent, totalling about a hundred pounds annually, are applied in reduction of the Vote on which expenditure is provided for. The expenditure on British services includes, among other things, the personnel emoluments of the British national staff, Police Force, and District Agents, and maintenance of houses of officers and police barracks.

The French Government maintains at national expense services similar to the above.

XVI.—MISCELLANEOUS.

Lands and Survey.

Land owned by settlers in the New Hebrides was acquired originally from native owners, either by purchase or barter. Ownership at the present day is based on these native deeds, but such deeds do not constitute a valid title until judgment has been pronounced upon them by the Joint Court. The procedure in regard to obtaining indefeasible titles to land in the New Hebrides is set out in Articles 22 to 27 of the Protocol of 1914. Approximately 1,000 claims have been lodged in the Joint Court representing an area of 2,150,000 acres, more or less.

The adjudication of land claims on Efate was completed during 1932 and the majority of claims in the Southern Islands similarly dealt with during 1933 and 1934. During 1934 and 1935 survey of Epi and adjacent islands was commenced and continued during 1936.

The speed with which claims have been dealt with has been dependent to a large extent on the progress of land surveys of the properties affected, and of the claims of opposing applicants for title.

A staff of surveyors is attached to the Court, but owing to the difficult nature of the country to be surveyed and identified, progress is necessarily slow. For financial reasons the staff of surveyors has lately been kept at a minimum.

In the adjudication of land claims, due consideration is given to the needs of the indigenous population that may be occupying lands coming up for registration. The Court instructs its surveyors to report on such matters in the course of their work, and is guided by such reports in deciding the desirability or necessity of making native reserves. The Anglo-French Protocol provides for the appointment of an official Native Advocate by the two Governments to watch over native interests in land matters and to bring to the notice of the Court instances of usurpation of land by settlers, as well as to assist them in opposing claims before the Court. The Torrens system of land registration has been adapted to the New Hebrides.

Atmospheric Disturbances.

A severe cyclone passed over the Group in January, 1936, causing considerable damage to plantations and buildings in the islands north of Efate. A few small craft were lost.

General.

H.M.S. *Leith* (Captain O. Bevir, R.N.) of the New Zealand Division of the Royal Navy visited the Group in September.

During September, His Excellency the French High Commissioner, M. Siadous, Governor of New Caledonia, passed through the Group *en route* for France. His successor, M. Marchessou, arrived in New Caledonia during December.

APPENDIX.

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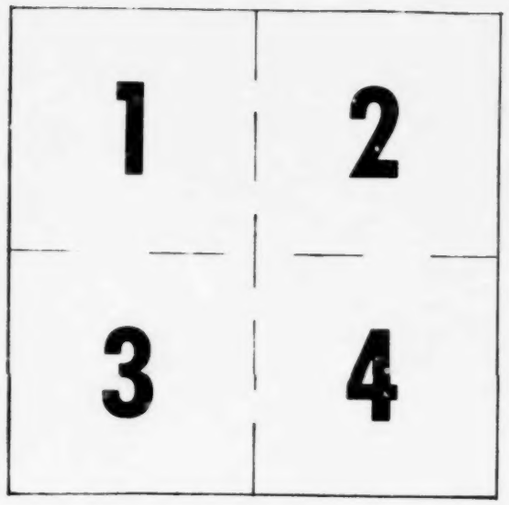

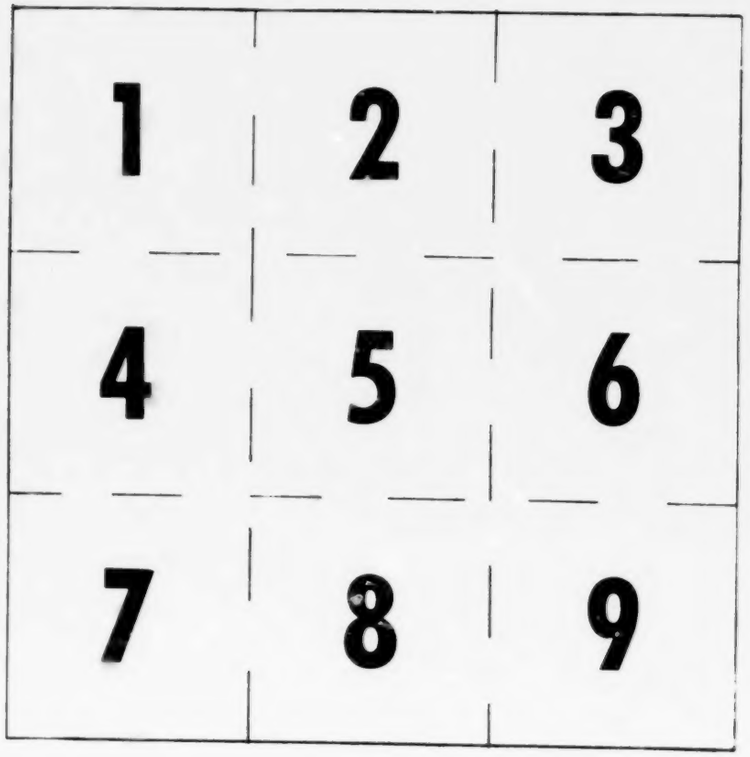

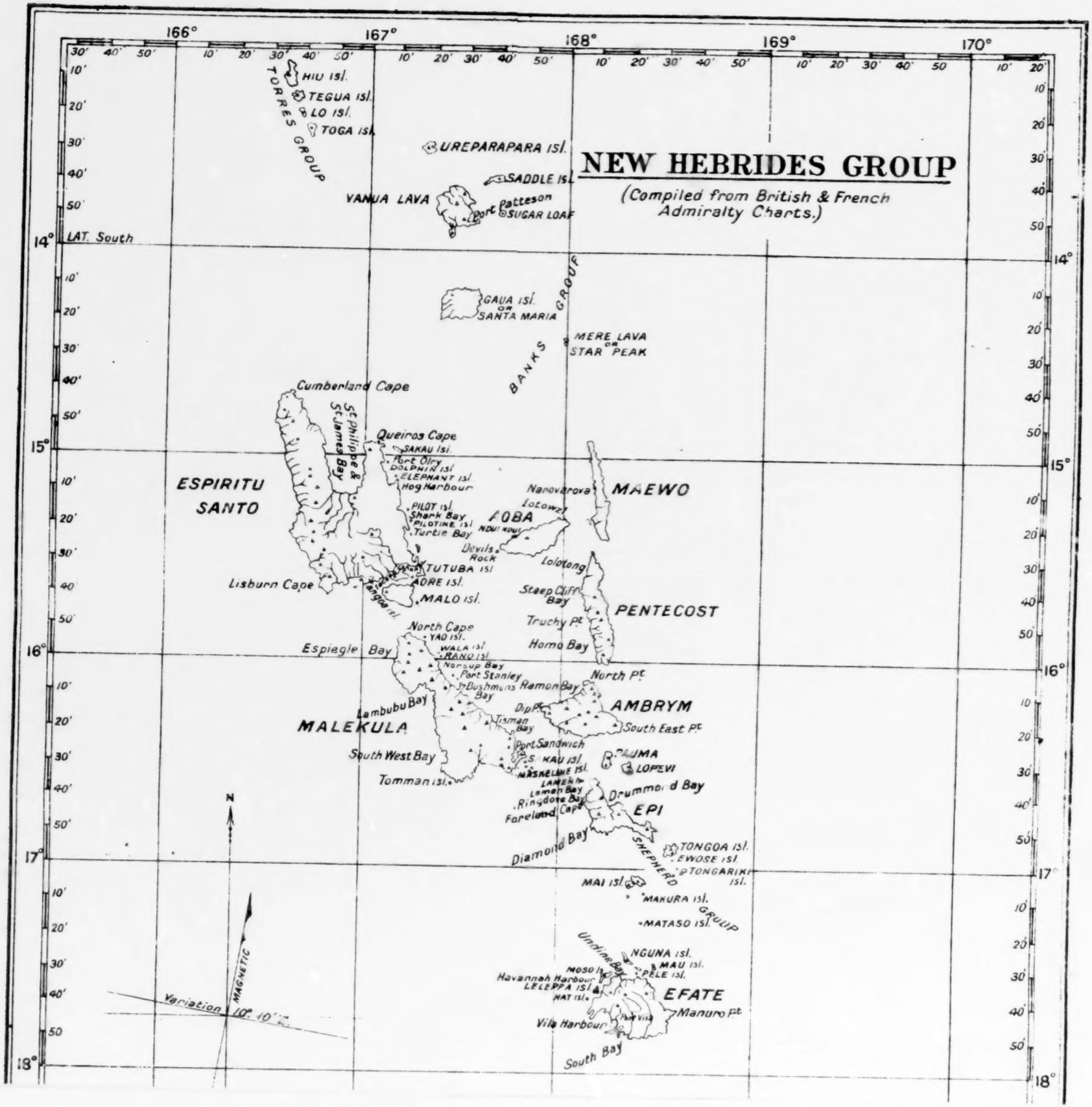
NEW HEBRIDES GROUP
(Compiled from British & French Admiralty Charts.)
166°
167°
168°
169°
170°
14°
15°
16°
17°
18°
LAT. South
TORRES GROUP
HIU ISL.
TEGUA ISL.
LO ISL.
TOGA ISL.
UREPARAPARA ISL.
SADDLE ISL.
VANUA LAVA
Port Patteson
SUGAR LOAF
BANKS GROUP
GAUA ISL. OR SANTA MARIA
MERE LAVA OR STAR PEAK
Cumberland Cape
St. Philippe & St. James Bay
Queiros Cape
SAKAU ISL.
Port Olry
DOLPHIN ISL.
ELEPHANT ISL.
Hog Harbour
ESPIRITU SANTO
PILOT ISL.
Shark Bay
PILOTINE ISL.
Turtle Bay
Nanovarova
Lotowai
AOBA
MAEWO
NDUI KIUI
Devils Rock
Lolotong
TUTUBA ISL.
Lisburn Cape
AORE ISL.
MALO ISL.
Tangoa ISL.
Steep Cliff Bay
Truchy Pt.
PENTECOST
North Cape
YAO ISL.
Espiegle Bay
WALA ISL.
RANO ISL.
Homo Bay
Norsup Bay
Port Stanley
Bushmans Bay
Ramon Bay
North Pt.
Lambubu Bay
MALEKULA
Dip Pt.
AMBRYM
Tisman Bay
South East Pt.
Port Sandwich
South West Bay
S. KAU ISL.
NASELELE ISL.
LOPEVI
Tomman ISL.
LAMEN
Lamen Bay
Ringdove Bay
Foreland Cape
Drummond Bay
EPI
Diamond Bay
SHEPHERD GROUP
TONGOA ISL.
EWOSE ISL.
TONGARIKI ISL.
MAI ISL.
MAKURA ISL.
MATASO ISL.
Undine Bay
NGUNA ISL.
MAU ISL.
PELE ISL.
Havannah Harbour
LELEPPA ISL.
HAT ISL.
EFATE
Manuro Pt.
Vila Harbour
Vila
South Bay
N
MAGNETIC
Variation 10° 10' E.

GAUA ISL. OR SANTA MARIA

MERE LAVA OR STAR PEAK

BANKS GROUP

Cumberland Cape

St Philip & St James Bay

Queiros Cape

SAKAU ISL.

Port Olry

DOLPHIN ISL

ELEPHANT ISL

Hog Harbour

ESPIRITU SANTO

Nanovarova

MAEWO

Lotowzy

PILOT ISL

Shark Bay

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Espiegle Bay

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RANO ISL.

Norsup Bay

Port Stanley

North Pt

Bushmans Bay

Ramon Bay

AMBRYM

Lambubu Bay

Dip Pt

MALEKULA

Tisman Bay

South East Pt

Port Sandwich

South West Bay

SAKAU ISL.

PAUMA

LOPEVI

MASKELYNE ISL.

LANEHA

Lamen Bay

Drummond Bay

Tomman ISL.

Ringdove Bay

Foreland Cape

EPI

Diamond Bay

SHEPHERD GROUP

TONGOA ISL.

EWOSE ISL.

TONGARIKI ISL.

MAI ISL

MAKURA ISL.

MATASO ISL.

Undine Bay

NGUNA ISL.

MAU ISL.

PELE ISL.

Mosso Is.

Havannah Harbour

LELEPPA ISL

NAT ISL.

EFATE

Manuro Pt

Vila Harbour

Port Vila

South Bay

Variation 10° 10' E.

MAGNETIC

N

Elisabeth Bay

Port Narevin

Dillon Bay

Cook Bay

ERROMANGA

South Bay

20 0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100 Statute Miles

20 0 20 40 60 80 100 200 Kilometres

ANIWA

Waisisi Bay

White Sands

TANNA

Lenakel Bay

Port Resolution

Inlau Pt

FUTUNA

Vila. 25th Feb. 1929.

Port Patrick

Aneigahaut Bay

ANEITYUM

15° 16° 17° 18° 19° 20°

166° 167° 168° E of Greenwich. 169° 170°

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Continued on page 3 of cover

ANNUAL REPORT ON THE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC PROGRESS OF THE PEOPLE OF THE NEW HEBRIDES, 1937

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I.—GEOGRAPHY, CLIMATE, AND HISTORY.

Geography.

The New Hebrides lie between the 13th and 21st degrees of South latitude, and the 166th and 170th degrees of East longitude, and are of an area of roughly 5,700 square miles.

The New Hebrides include the Banks and Torres Groups, the former lying a few miles due north of the main Group, and the latter about 40 miles to the north-west of the Banks, the whole forming an irregular double chain some 440 miles in length.

The largest islands of the Group are Santo and Malekula, the former having an area of approximately 1,500 square miles, and a coastline of about 200 miles. Both islands are mountainous and rugged, parts of Santo rising to over 6,000 feet.

Other larger islands in their order of importance are Efate, Ambrym, Erromanga, Epi, Aoba, Pentecost and Maeovo, and Gaua and Vanua Lava of the Banks Group. In addition to these are some 80 small islands and islets.

There are three active volcanoes in the Group situated on the islands of Tanna, Ambrym and Lopevi, respectively. The first two are in a constant state of activity, emitting smoke and vapour at irregular intervals. Ambrym volcano periodically erupts with great severity.

The Group possesses four good harbours, Vila and Havannah Harbours situated on the island of Efate, and Ports Sandwich and Stanley on Malekula, besides a number of good sheltered anchorages such as the Segond Channel and Pallicollo on Santo, Ringdove Bay on Epi, The Maskelynes off South Malekula, Undine Bay on Efate, and Anelgahaut on Aneityum.

The Headquarters of the Administration are situated at Vila, which is also the chief commercial centre of the Group. Other important settlements are located at Epi, Malekula, and the Segond Channel, Santo.

The Group is generally well watered. On the larger islands are several small rivers navigable to boats and small motor craft for a distance of some miles. The only lake of any size in the Group is found on top of the island of Gaua in the Banks Group, and is some four miles in circumference.

Climate.

The New Hebrides islands are classed as unhealthy. The climate, although very enervating is not worse than that of many other tropical places. The year is divided up, generally speaking, into two seasons, the hot and wet season, commencing in November and ending in April, and the dry and cool season from May to October. Of late, however, the tendency is for the line of demarcation to become less clear, there being considerable periods of drought in the rainy season and vice versa in the dry season. The temperature in the island of Efate ranges from a minimum of about 60° F. in the cool season to a maximum of about 92° F. in the hot. The hot season is the most unhealthy owing to the extreme humidity and the prevalence of mosquitoes. Also it is so enervating as to make recovery from an illness somewhat prolonged. The cool season is, generally speaking, healthy and pleasant. The southern islands of the Group are cooler and healthier than the northern—the latter being about 7° F. warmer on the average. Rainfall increases the nearer the equator is approached, and varies from some 50 inches in the extreme South to over 200 inches in the extreme North of the Group.

History.

The New Hebrides Group was discovered by the Spanish explorer de Quiros in the year 1606. Under the impression that he had at last found the long-sought Southern Continent, the quest for which occupied the navigators of this period, he called it " Tierra Austrialia del Espiritu Santo ". He anchored in a large bay to which he gave the name of St. Phillip and St. James, and on the shores of a river flowing into that bay he established the settlement of La Nuova Jerusalem. To the port which undoubtedly existed in those days he gave the name of Vera Cruz. This island is to-day known as Santo. Owing to sickness and dissensions with the natives the settlement was soon abandoned and to-day, so far as is known, no traces of it

exist. The port of Vera Cruz has likewise disappeared, nor can its original site be traced along the 40 odd miles of coastline forming the bay.

Nothing more was heard of the Group until some 160 years later, when in 1768, the French navigator Bougainville passed to the southward of de Quiros's discovery, and sailed between the islands known to-day as Santo and Malekula, thus disproving de Quiros's claims to the discovery of the great Southern Continent. The strait through which he passed still bears his name. On the same voyage he discovered the islands of Pentecost, Aoba, and Maeovo, to which he gave the name of the Cyclades.

It remained, however, for the great navigator Captain Cook to discover and chart the greater part of the Group in the year 1774, when, entering the Group from the north, he sailed to the southward, discovering and naming the majority of the islands which form the southern chain of the Group. It is recorded that among other places visited he spent some fifteen days in the then snug little harbour of Port Resolution on the island of Tanna. Since those days, however, the floor of the harbour has risen, and where Captain Cook anchored in four fathoms of water, to-day a small launch will scarcely float.

Among other early visitors may be cited Laperouse who is supposed to have visited the Group in 1788; and d'Entracasteaux, who came in search of Laperouse in 1793.

In the same year the Banks Islands were sighted by Bligh on the occasion of his famous voyage in an open boat to Timor after the mutiny of the *Bounty*.

Dumont d'Urville, Belcher, and Markham, are among the early voyagers whose accounts of these islands are of interest.

By virtue of the Anglo-French convention of 16th November, 1887, whereby, among other things, each nation agreed not to exercise a separate control over the Group, a Joint Naval Commission was appointed, consisting of the respective Captains and two Officers from each of the two warships which then paid periodical visits to the Group. The Commission was charged with the protection of the lives and property of the subjects of the two nations—France and England—in the islands.

By the year 1895 a number of British and French subjects had settled in the Group and the necessity was felt for some jurisdiction to deal with their disputes, in consequence of which an Arbitration Court was established by the colonists, but the Joint Naval Commission pronounced its veto and the Court was dissolved.

In 1902 the Group had assumed sufficient importance to necessitate the appointment of Resident Commissioners to deal with such judicial cases as came within their jurisdiction. In 1902 the first British Resident Commissioner was appointed, the French Government having a short time previously appointed a similar officer.

II.—GOVERNMENT.

By the Convention of 20th October, 1906, between the United Kingdom and France, British-French Condominium Government was established. The executive consists of a British and a French Resident Commissioner acting in concert, each assisted by a staff of officers. The Administrative Departments of the Condominium are staffed by officers of both nationalities who are subject to the control of the Resident Commissioners acting jointly. Each Power retains sovereignty over its own nationals. The seat of Government is at Vila on the island of Efate. Condominium agents of both nationalities are established on various islands of the Group and are allotted joint areas of control. The executive must in all cases reach joint agreement in decisions affecting the administration of the Condominium. The principal Condominium Judicial body is the Joint Court which is composed of a British and a French Judge with a President of neutral nationality. The joint services include the Joint Court, finance, posts and telegraphs, customs, public health, lands registry, and public works.

The Convention of 1906 has been superseded by the Convention of 6th August, 1914, which was ratified in 1922.

The British and French Resident Commissioners are subordinate to their respective British and French High Commissioners. The British High Commissioner is stationed at Suva, and the French High Commissioner at Noumea.

III.—POPULATION.

The population of the New Hebrides is composed of some 40,000 natives and 3,026 non-natives. A statement is appended giving details of the non-native population.

Description.	*British.*			*French.*			*Totals.*
	Adult Males.	*Females and Children.*	*Total.*	*Adult Males.*	*Females and Children.*	*Total.*	
Nationals ...	114	112	226	264	459	723	949
Foreigners opted under Protocol	6	5	11	27	9	36	47
Asiatics opted under Protocol	49	21	70	54	27	81	151
Protected subjects and citizens :—							
Tonkinese	—	—	—	1,464	414	1,878	1,878
Samoan ...	1	—	1	—	—	—	1
Totals ...	170	138	308	1,809	909	2,718	3,026

Of the European population, some 420 French and 66 British reside on the island of Efate, mainly in and around the town of Vila. Santo is the next important centre and carries about 20 British and 230 French. The balance is distributed throughout the Group. The European population of the Southern part of the Group is mainly British, amounting to 29 persons; of this number 24 reside on the island of Tanna (15 British and 9 French).

The Chinese and Japanese community number 93 and 58 respectively and are centred in and around the town of Vila.

The primitive state of the interior of some of the islands of the New Hebrides precludes the taking of any reliable census of the indigenous population.

Malekula is credited with the largest population, some 9,000 natives. Next come Santo and Pentecost, about 7,000 each; Tanna, 6,500; Aoba, 6,000; Ambrym, 4,000; Epi, 2,500; and Efate, 2,000. Among the smaller islands whose population is worthy of note may be cited Paama with just over 2,000, and Tongoa with 1,300 inhabitants.

In general the native population of the Group is on the decline, but for some years the islands of Tanna, Paama, and Tongoa have shown a small increase, which is still maintained. In this connexion it is interesting to note that the natives of these islands appear to be endowed with keener intelligence than their fellows, which, coupled with increased activity, may have some bearing on their present immunity from decline.

IV.—HEALTH.

Extract from Chief Condominium Medical Officer's Report for 1937.

During the year the chief " endo-epidemic " diseases treated were: malaria, blackwater fever, yaws, amoebic and bacillary dysentery, rodent ulcers, hookworm, beri-beri, filaria and ringworm.

Malaria and yaws were the most notable.

On Efate an investigation on malaria was made. School children in Vila were found to have an average splenic index of 42·70. Outside Vila, investigations showed a native splenic index of 100. Malignant tertian parasites were found more frequently than the benign variety (viz., 242 against 61).

An investigation of yaws among natives was made in the Norsup region, Malekula. The general index was found to be 13 and, for children under 6, 27·6.

Whooping cough was introduced into the Group from exterior sources during the course of the year, and soon spread, mainly among the native population, taking a severe form, and had not at the end of the year ceased its epidemic cycle. Natives of all ages were attacked and many deaths occurred. Complications

of a broncho-pulmonary type were frequent. A successful treatment for natives was found to be a daily injection of 1 c.c. of ether

There were also lesser outbreaks of influenza, mumps, German measles and scarlet fever.

Leprosy and venereal disease were found, but not to an exaggerated degree.

Tuberculosis is chiefly of a pulmonary type and was found in all districts.

An increasing effort at native medical welfare is being made and the results have been encouraging.

Organization of Services.

The Medical organization of the New Hebrides may be grouped under:—

(1) The French Government Medical Service.
(2) British Mission Medical Services.
(3) The Condominium Medical Service, which consists of officers of (1) and (2) above, who receive allowances from Condominium funds for certain medical and health duties, plus native medical practitioners.

There are seven European doctors, six hospitals and three medical aid posts in the Group. The location of the latter is as follows:—

Southern Islands.

Tanna.—A well-equipped hospital run by the Presbyterian Mission, assisted by a grant from British funds. A British medical practitioner is in charge of the hospital. There is also a small French hospital in charge of an officer of the French medical service. A leper segregation area is established on Tanna under the auspices of the Condominium Government and treatment is given.

Central Islands.

Efate.—There are two good hospitals at Vila, the John G. Paton Memorial Hospital, administered by the Presbyterian Mission and assisted by a grant from British funds, and the French Government hospital. These hospitals have trained European staffs and are in charge of qualified medical officers. The French Government has recently erected a new non-European wing at the French hospital.

Malekula.—There is a French Government hospital at Norsup and a European medical officer is in charge. At Port Sandwich there is a French Government medical aid post.

Northern Islands.

Santo.—The French Government have established a hospital in the Segond Channel, Santo, with a European medical officer in charge and European staff.

Aoba and Pentecost.—The Melanesian Mission has completed its hospital at Lolowai and this replaces one medical aid post. There are two medical aid posts belonging to the same mission, one on Aoba and one on Pentecost. It is hoped soon to appoint a resident medical officer.

All these institutions are open to the indigenous population as well as to white residents and Asiatics.

STATISTICS.

1937.

Cases.	*British Hospital Vila*			*French Hospitals (amalgamated).*		
	European.	*Natives and Asiatics.*	*Total.*	*European.*	*Natives and Asiatics.*	*Total.*
In-patients ...	43	393	436	212	1,886	2,098
Out-patients ...	—	1,637	1,637	709	6,517	7,226
Total ...	43	2,030	2,073	921	8,403	9,324
Deaths ...	—	13	13	7	75	82

Sanitation.

Sanitation in the islands of the Group is still in the early stages of development, but progress has been made at Vila, the capital, during the last few years, where services have been organized respectively to kerosene rain water tanks (the only present water supply) and other breeding places of mosquitoes, clear the continually growing bush throughout the town, and collect and dispose of refuse. These services have undoubtedly contributed greatly to the improvement of the health of the community.

All Government houses in Vila are supplied with septic tanks and the system is gradually being adopted by private individuals and commercial firms, instead of the pit system of latrine.

Sanitary legislation provides *inter alia* for the inspection of meat for human consumption, the inspection of public and private premises, the approval of plans for new dwelling houses, and obliges householders to keep their premises free from undergrowth and refuse.

V.—HOUSING.

Houses occupied by Europeans in the Group are usually of the one storey bungalow type of two or more rooms surrounded by verandahs. They are generally constructed of wood and galvanized iron. Owing to the frequency of earthquake shocks buildings of brick, stone, or concrete are not favoured.

In the more civilized areas, natives are gradually adapting themselves to European ideas of construction and a marked improvement in native dwelling houses is noticeable in villages adjacent to Vila.

In the outlying islands, mission natives favour dwelling houses constructed of lime mortar, which is a great improvement on the grass or leaf hut of former days, and far more comfortable and sanitary.

The non-mission or heathen native still clings to the insanitary grass or leaf shelter accommodating the whole of his family, and, more often than not, his pigs and dogs as well. But with the gradual advance of civilization this system is being discarded in favour of the more substantial dwellings above mentioned.

The building of houses, etc., in the town of Vila is governed by the provision of a Town Conservancy Regulation which requires all plans of projected dwelling houses to be passed by a Sanitary Commission.

VI.—NATURAL RESOURCES.

The New Hebrides have an area of approximately 5,700 square miles, parts of which are mountainous and unsuitable for cultivation. Though no accurate figures are available it is estimated that European owned plantations consist of approximately 33,000 acres under coconuts, 9,000 acres under cocoa, 7,000 acres under coffee and 125 acres under miscellaneous produce. In addition to this, larger areas, of which no estimate is available, are under coconuts and indigenous food crops of various kinds cultivated and owned by natives.

The produce of the Group may be roughly divided into export products and local food products.

The chief export products are copra, coffee, cocoa, shell and sandalwood. A comparative table of all exports is given at the end of Chapter VII. Coffee, cocoa, cotton and wool are entirely produced by European concerns. About five-sixths of the copra is produced by European plantations and one-sixth by individual natives. These are the only industries in the Group which may be said to be organized. Shell, béche de mer and sandalwood are exported, but are obtained by traders and commercial houses from individual natives and Asiatics. Hides are a by-product of slaughter for meat consumption and the quantity exported is small. Coconuts are occasionally exported by plantations when the market is favourable. Of the products mentioned above as being exported, coconuts are of course also locally consumed as well as a small quantity of coffee.

Traces of minerals of various kinds have been found in the Group, but there has been no development in this direction.

There is no organized fishing industry. Apart from shell fishing by natives and Asiatics, a small quantity of fish is caught for local consumption.

The only livestock industry is a sheep station, running about 3,000 head of sheep, on the island of Erromanga. Cattle are raised on plantations primarily for the purpose of keeping down scrub, but they are also the source of local fresh meat and milk supplies.

Vegetables of many kinds are produced by Chinese market gardeners around Vila, and also by private individuals in lesser quantities, for local consumption.

A considerable variety of foods is produced by natives for their own use. Chief among these are coconuts, yams, taro, manioc, breadfruit, bananas, pawpaws and pineapples. Oranges, lemons, limes, avocado pears, custard apples and many edible nuts and roots are found in fair quantity throughout the Group, but most of these are not specially cultivated.

No reliable estimates of quantities and values of products consumed or used locally exist.

Land is held by non-natives by virtue of sales from natives. Registration of titles so acquired is now in process, but will take many years to complete. All land not thus acquired remains vested in the native. Sales of land to non-natives and the registration of land titles are governed by the Anglo-French Protocol of 1914. There is no separate legislation governing mineral and water rights.

There is no organized forestry in the Group, but many valuable trees exist including sandalwood, kauri, teak and a variety of other useful hardwoods, though as yet, with the exception of sandalwood, these have been little exploited.

Native and Asiatic export products are universally sold to traders and commercial houses in exchange for cash or goods. There are no co-operative systems. Plantations usually sell their produce to or through commercial houses, but in a few cases make their own export and sales arrangements.

VII.—COMMERCE.

The New Hebrides may be said to be virtually self-supporting in essential foodstuffs, there being a sufficiency of fresh meat, milk, vegetables, fruit and native foods for the needs of the European, Asiatic and native population. The only foodstuffs of which there are extensive importations are sugar, flour, rice and tinned meats and fish, a large part of which is used as a convenient means of feeding natives and Asiatic labour on plantations and elsewhere. Other foodstuffs imported are chiefly those forming the diets of Europeans and Asiatics and which are not readily obtainable in the Group, and luxuries. Apart from

foodstuffs, all manufactured articles must be imported. The chief imports are tea, beer, wines and spirits, tobacco, petrol, kerosene, gunny bags, building materials, machinery and soap.

The most important export from the Group is copra, which amounted to 11,746 tons valued at £101,390 in 1937, as against 10,424 tons and £90,171 in 1936. After copra next in importance come cocoa (1,448 tons £30,167, against 891 tons, £12,026), coffee (437 tons £13,745, against 307 tons, £13,464), shell and sandalwood.

Prices in 1937 were mostly lower than in 1936 particularly towards the end of the year. However, the absence of cyclones contributed to a larger outturn, which partly compensated for the loss of income. Shell and sandalwood were often a nominal market owing to conditions caused by the Sino-Japanese conflict.

The following tables are attached:—

I. Comparative table of values of total imports.
II. Comparative table of values of chief imports.
III. Comparative table of proportion of imports from various countries.
IV. Comparative table of quantities and values of exports.
V. Table of destination of exports.
VI. Comparative table of prices of exports.

Imports and exports of coin and bullion are negligible and no tables have been given.

Imports.

COMPARATIVE TABLE OF VALUES OF IMPORTS.

Year.	*British currency.*	*French currency.*	*Remarks.* Converted at francs.
	£	Francs.	
1924	92,201	7,929,327	86 = £
1925	217,863	22,004,232	101 = £
1926	197,840	30,457,405	154 = £
1927	307,939	38,184,562	124 = £
1928	373,797	46,474,828	124 = £*
1929	300,035	37,204,343	124 = £*
1930	157,541	19,535,138	124 = £*
1931	79,997	9,919,635	124 = £*
1932	81,587	10,116,807	124 = £*
1933	85,544	10,607,515	124 = £*
1934	75,993	9,423,132	124 = £*
1935	115,492	8,661,951	Rate of exchange of the day.
1936	123,800	10,056,000	,,
1937	152,722	19,195,524	,,

* Fixed rate of exchange

COMPARATIVE TABLE OF CHIEF IMPORTS.

	Principal source of supply.	*1933.* £ (*a*)	*1934.* £ (*a*)	*1935.* £ (*b*)	*1936.* £ (*b*)	*1937.* £ (*b*)
Beer	Australia ...	1,240	1,277	1,638	1,060	1,394
Benzine (petrol)	America and Java	3,741	2,024	2,148	2,639	5,674
Biscuits (ship's)	Australia ...	496	568	953	728	1,512
Tinned goods and groceries	America ... Australia ...	1,508	1,164	1,766	3,152	4,422
Cartridges ...	Australia ...	247	284	153	327	752
Tobacco ...	France ... ... Australia ... United Kingdom	5,140	3,819	5,126	4,997	5,502
Cement ...	Japan ... ... Indo China ... Australia ...	536	1,018	1,311	700	985
Lubricating oils	America ...	1,606	1,570	3,230	959	846
Spirits... ...	France ... ... United Kingdom	1,590	1,845	3,369	1,779	2,043
Tinned milk ...	Australia ...	9 3	759	1,208	908	951
Kerosene ...	America ...	3,329	1,323	1,814	1,712	4,706
Rice	Java	4,467	3,335	6,737	9,450	11,834
Flour	Australia ...	2,143	2,040	3,472	3,317	4,773
Sugar	Java	1,259	1,316	2,111	2,000	2,213
Soap	France ... ... Australia ...	575	416	517	775	1,102
Tinned fish ...	Australia ... America ...	1,850	590	1,212	1,766	3,235
Wines (fine) ...	France	1,000	511	637	706	1,862
Wines (ordinaire)	France	2,817	1,909	3,092	2,135	2,434
Gunny bags ...	India	4,166	2,084	3,175	4,150	4,626
Building materials	Australia ...	5,701	3,023	6,774	4,512	10,885
Agricultural machinery, and boats ...	Australia ...	2,189	3,796	8,445	5,869	9,742
Motor cars ...	America ...					
Potatoes ...	Australia ...	298	351	566	624	633
Tea	Australia ...	1,190	800	1,089	1,030	1,270
Fuel oil ...	America ...	—	—	—	—	1,060

(*a*) Converted at the fixed rate of 124 francs = £1.

(*b*) Converted at the current rate of exchange Share of imports of British and French importers respectively 33 per cent. and 67 per cent. by value.

COMPARATIVE TABLE OF PROPORTION OF IMPORTS FROM VARIOUS COUNTRIES.

	1935. *Per cent.*	*1936.* *Per cent.*	*1937.* *Per cent.*
United Kingdom	2·5	2·25	2·00
Australia	48·5	70·5	68·30
Hong Kong	1·25	1·33	1·61
France and French Colonies ...	21·00	15·66	18·18
U.S.A.	12·25	1·66	1·75
Japan	7·00	5·25	4·34
Dutch Indies	1·5	1·66	0·85
Various	6·00	1·75	2·97

Comparative Table of Quantities and Values of Exports.

	1933.*		1934.*		1935.		1936.*		1937.	
	Tons.	Value. (a) £	Tons.	Value. (a) £	Tons.	Value. (b) £	Tons.	Value. (b) £	Tons.	Value. (b) £
Copra	7,045	23,864	6,939	14,886	9,859	61,783	10,424	90,171	11,746	101,390
Cocoa	1,893	28,745	1,728	19,512	2,672	42,047	891	12,026	1,448	30,167
Coffee	433	13,937	318	9,624	366	19,367	307	13,404	437	13,745
Cotton	62	1,084	19	307	33	966	25	713	6	151
Trochus and Burghaus shell	110	1,782	130	2,970	98	3,594	106	3,381	58	1,752
Maize	35	143	43	209	106	283	1	1	3	3
Sandalwood	61	941	100	1,446	66	1,704	81	1,656	63	902
Wool	9	436	9	441	6	515	4	232	4·5	280
Cotton seed	128	121	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Hides	21	172	28	273	23	287	32	302	41	376
Castor oil seed	52	172	29	72	17	69	—	—	—	—
Coconuts	79	185	94	133	40	91	43	120	93	370
Bêche-de-mer	18	236	3	39	2	43	1	24	0·75	14
Miscellaneous	97	21	200	21	136	188	64	38	133·75	97
Totals	10,043	71,839	9,587	49,933	13,423	130,937	11,979	122,068	14,034	149,247

(a) Converted at the fixed rate of 124 francs = £1. (b) Converted at the rate of exchange of the day.

* In these years exports were unfavourably affected by cyclones.

Note.—The share of produce exported as British by British firms and planters was 3·2 per cent. and 2·7 per cent. for tonnage and value respectively.

COMPARATIVE TABLE OF DESTINATION OF EXPORTS.

	(*By value.*) (*a*)	*1935.* *Per cent.*	*1936.* *Per cent.*	*1937.* *Per cent.*
To British Empire ...		6·5	8	3·6
To Foreign Countries ...		93·5	92	96·4

Countries of Destination.

	(*By value.*) (*b*)	*1935.* *Per cent.*	*1936.* *Per cent.*	*1937.* *Per cent.*
France		91·7	91·5	94·5
Australia		5·4	6·9	3·2
New Caledonia		1·8	·5	1·9
China		1·1	1·1	0·4

COMPARATIVE TABLE OF PRICES OF EXPORTS.

(*Per metric ton.*)

	1933. (*a*) £	*1934.* (*a*) £	*1935.* (*b*) £	*1936.* (*b*) £	*1937.* (*b*) £
Copra	3·4	2·15	6·25	8·65	8·6
Coffee	32	32	53	45	31
Cocoa	15	11·3	15·6	13·5	21
Cotton	18	18	29·35	28·5	26
Maize	4	5	2·65	—	—
Trochus	20	28	43	45	40
Burghaus	6	6	10	10·6	7·3
Wool	47	68	94	66	62

(*a*) Converted at the fixed rate of 124 francs. = £1.
(*b*) Converted at the rate of exchange of the day.

VIII.—LABOUR.

Native Labour.

Native labour may be divided into three main classes:—

(*a*) Plantation labour, boats' crews of small local vessels, employees of traders, Government messengers, constabulary, etc., on contract and otherwise;

(*b*) domestic labour;

(*c*) casual labour, working on steamers, wharves, Government works, etc.

The tendency to employ "free labour" (not under contract) is increasing except in the case of certain plantations which have difficulty in obtaining labour near at hand. The growth of a "free" labour market is a satisfactory feature as it has a tendency to bring the wages and treatment of labour into more exact relationship with prices. It is doubtful, however, if certain plantations would ever be able to be run without a few contracted men at least to ensure the proper harvesting of certain seasonal crops.

The native's aversion to long term engagements is as pronounced as ever; he prefers to work without engagement if possible and will not usually bind himself for more than 12 months.

By nature the native of the New Hebrides is lazy and of mercurial temperament. He will not work unless circumstances compel him. His wants are less simple than formerly, as he has become accustomed to European food and clothing. When times are good labour is exceedingly scarce and dear, as the majority of natives can obtain all they want by the sale of the produce of their lands, and with a minimum of exertion. When times are bad, the point arrives when the native, having exhausted his hoarded savings, cannot, without a very great deal of exertion himself, obtain the luxuries he desires. He is then faced with the choice of work on his own account, which is unpalatable, or, on the other hand, either reverting to his natural state in the matter of food (of which there is plenty) and clothing, or working for wages.

Domestic labour remains by comparison difficult to secure, as neither the male nor the female native takes kindly to this form of service and can be rarely prevailed upon to stay with an employer for an extended period.

The employment of natives under engagement of any kind is governed by the provisions of the Protocol of 1914, and, in the case of British dependents, also by national legislation. There are no native labour unions.

Statistics of Engagements.

At the end of 1937 there were the following numbers of labourers under engagement:—

Natives.		*Indo-Chinese.*
British.	*French.*	*French.*
61	917	1,822

Asiatic Labour.

Asiatic labour consists of:—

(*a*) Indo-Chinese coolies introduced into the territory by the French Government under contract, for employment by French settlers. These Tonkinese are, generally speaking, satisfactory, being of a superior intelligence to the natives, if not physically so strong. They are naturally hard-workers and receive approximately 80 francs a month, plus food, clothing, lodging, etc. The devaluation of the franc has rendered the cost to the settler lower than that of the native labourer, though, in addition to wages, he has to bear the cost of transportation to and from Indo-China, Government inspection and medical surveillance, etc. At the end of the year there were 1,878 Indo-Chinese coolies in the Group including 414 women and children.

(*b*) Free Chinese and Japanese labour of the artisan class. These are very few, and work on a day-to-day basis at wages varying according to skill and the demand for labour. Such wages vary from 5s. to 15s. a day. There are also a few Chinese employed as stewards, cooks, and firemen, on inter-island steamers at rates varying from £4 to £10 per month with rations. There are no Asiatic labour unions.

European Labour.

European labour in the ordinary sense does not exist. A few Europeans occasionally undertake paid work for wages, but this is the exception rather than the rule. There is no accepted standard of wages for Europeans and labour unions do not exist.

IX.—WAGES AND COST OF LIVING.

European.

Europeans in the service of Government or trading concerns in Vila are usually provided with free partly-furnished quarters. Other non-natives have to rent or provide their own houses or live in boarding houses. Rents in Vila vary from £5 per month upwards. *En pension* accommodation of inferior quality may be had for approximately 5s. a day. In the interests of health and morale it is desirable for Europeans to maintain as high a standard of living as their means permit in order to combat the effects of climate and monotony. The price level is higher than in Australia. The cost of living outside Vila is somewhat lower owing to facilities for maintaining livestock, poultry, and vegetable gardens, and also the relatively lower cost of native labour.

Chinese and Japanese.

These may be divided up roughly into three classes, namely, small storekeepers, market gardeners and labourers and artisans. Free labour or artisans obtain from 5s. to 15s. a day wages according to skill. There are also a few Chinese employed as cooks, firemen and stewards in the inter-island vessels at rates varying from £4 to £10 per month, with rations. The market gardeners are all Chinese and produce nearly the whole vegetable supply of Vila. Owing to the Asiatic standard the cost of living of this class is lower than that of Europeans, but is sufficiently high to maintain a good standard of health.

Natives.

Natives, generally speaking, live on the produce of their gardens and have in these an abundant and reasonably satisfactory supply of food for no cost except their own toil. This supply is supplemented, when they can afford it, by imported food stuffs, for which they are cultivating an increasing taste. They also purchase clothing and other manufactured articles according to the standard they have achieved.

The current rates of wages for native labour are as follows:—

Class (a)

Traders' employees ...	10s. to £2 per month with food and clothing, whether under engagement or not, sometimes together with piece-work.
Boats' crews	
Plantation labourers ...	

Government messengers	£3 per month without food.
Constabulary	From £2 per month with food and clothing.

Note.—Local or casual labour is frequently employed on plantations for picking cotton and seasonal crops on a daily wage from 1s. to 2s. with or without food, according to arrangement.

Class (b)

Domestic labour	£1 to £2 per month with food and clothing, whether engaged or not.

Class (c)

Casual labour, other than plantation	2s. to 4s. per day with or without food and according to skill.

Indo-Chinese Coolies.

These are dealt with in Chapter VIII. They are only available to French subjects and at present rates of exchange their cost is lower than that of native labour.

Retail Prices.

The following are the approximate average prices of the principal articles of necessity in Vila during 1937.

Fresh milk	5d. to 6d. per quart.	
Flour	2d. to 2½d.	per lb.
Rice	1½d. to 3d.	per lb.
Sugar	2½d. to 5d.	per lb.
Potatoes	2d. to 3d.	per lb.
Fresh meat	5d. to 1s.	per lb.
Onions	3d.	per lb.
Butter	1s. 10d. to 3s.	per lb.
Tea	3s. 3d. to 4s.	per lb.
Coffee	1s. 6d. to 3s.	per lb.
Eggs	2s. 6d. to 3s. 6d.	per dozen.
Poultry	3s. to 10s.	each.
Tinned meat	1s. 3d. to 2s. 6d.	per lb.
Wood fuel	4s. to 10s.	per cubic metre.
Kerosene	8s. to 10s per tin (4 gallons).	
Petrol	8s. to 10s per tin (4 gallons).	

X.—EDUCATION AND WELFARE INSTITUTIONS.

There are no schools controlled or supported by the Condominium Government, nor are there any facilities for European children to receive anything but a primary education, which is not of a very high standard.

The town of Vila has three schools: (1) a school for girls, supported and controlled by the Sisters of the Sacred Heart Mission; (2) a boys school, supported and controlled by the

Marist Mission; and (3) an infants school run by the French Government. There is also a mixed primary school at Segond Channel, Santo, under the auspices of the Marist Mission. Admission to these schools is not restricted to the children of Europeans and the fees are purely nominal.

The British and French Missions in the Group have various elementary schools and training institutions for the benefit of the natives. The Presbyterian Mission maintains a school at Tangoa, South Santo, for the training of mission teachers, and can accommodate up to 60 pupils. They also maintain mission schools throughout the Group. The Melanesian Mission have two schools at Lolowai, Aoba—one for native girls and one for native boys. The Seventh Day Adventist Mission have a utilitarian school at Aore Island, Santo, which is equipped with machinery for teaching all kinds of woodcraft. The Marist Mission also maintains schools in various islands of the Group.

All these institutions carry out excellent work among the natives and deserve commendation.

Apart from the educational work achieved by the missions, there is the equally important and beneficial medical work undertaken by the Presbyterian and Melanesian Missions. The Presbyterian Mission maintains two well-equipped hospitals in the Group, and the Melanesian Mission one, the latter in addition to two medical aid posts. These hospitals and posts are primarily intended for native patients, but their services are available to white sufferers.

Many missionaries of all denominations have been trained in simple medicine and in the giving of injections. They give splendid service in the combating of native complaints such as yaws, hookworm, skin diseases and malaria, and in the sanitary and hygienic education of the native.

All the above institutions give instruction in the villages of their districts on simple hygiene, maternity, child welfare, etc.

XI.—COMMUNICATIONS AND TRANSPORT.

Shipping.

Europe.—A service of the Messageries Maritimes Line is maintained every six or seven weeks between the terminal ports of Dunkirk and Noumea (New Caledonia), via Vila, on both inward and outward voyages via Panama. The period of the voyage is 45-55 days between Vila and Marseilles.

Australia.—The s.s. *Morinda* (Burns Philp Line) and the s.s. *Pierre Loti* (Messageries Maritimes) maintain respectively six-weekly and periodical communications with Sydney, New South Wales, the former via Norfolk Island and Lord Howe Island on the outward and homeward voyages from Sydney,

and the latter via Lifou, Loyalty Islands, and Noumea, New Caledonia. The s.s. *Pierre Loti* also maintains a periodical service with Indo-China and Hong Kong. These steamers are subsidized by the Commonwealth Government and French Government respectively to carry mails.

Dutch Line.—A regular service is also maintained by a vessel of the Royal Packet Navigation (K.P.M.) Company between Saigon and Noumea, New Zealand and Sydney, touching at Vila every two months via Batavia, Papua and New Guinea.

Inter-Island.—The following steamers make periodical voyages round the Group. They have no fixed itinerary but usually connect at Vila with the French or British mail vessels: s.s. *Mirani* (Burns Philp (South Sea) Company Limited) and m.v. *Polynesien* (Messageries Maritimes).

Vila is the port of entry of the Group. The tonnage entered and cleared during 1937 was as follows:—

Entered.

	Tons.	
British	23,985	(14 vessels)
French	131,169	(36 vessels)
Other	13,666	(7 vessels)
	168,820	

Cleared.

	Tons.	
British	22,839	(13 vessels)
French	131,076	(34 vessels)
Others	13,666	(7 vessels)
	167,581	

Ports.

Vessels of any size can enter the Port of Vila but the number of anchorages for large vessels is limited. All loading and discharging is carried out in lighters as the wharves and jetties at Vila are not suitable for vessels exceeding 100 tons.

Railways.

There are no railways in the Group. The small wharves, privately owned by the commercial houses in Vila, are provided with rails for the transport of trolleys of merchandise and produce to and from the bulk store sheds.

Posts.

There is mail communication direct with Australia, and thence with other parts of the world, every few weeks. There is also direct communication every six or seven weeks with Europe,

via Panama, but this route is much slower than the former. Considerable use is now being made of the air mails from Australia.

The mails, both inward and outward, are sorted at Vila and re-bagged for distribution round the Group by the inter-island steamers which receive a grant from the Condominium Government for the services performed. The average time for European postal matter to reach Vila by the Australian mail route is 42 to 49 days. The Condominium Government has a postage stamp issue designed to represent the dual control. There are two series of stamps—one British and one French. Both are inscribed in international franc currency.

The postal matter handled by the Vila Post Office for 1937 was as follows:—

	From or to British territory.		*From or to French territory.*		*From or to other places.*		*Totals.*
	Received.	*Despatched.*	*Received.*	*Despatched.*	*Received.*	*Despatched.*	
Letters	27,000	23,000	55,000	40,000	5,000	5,000	155,000
Other articles ...	45,000	4,000	33,000	3,000	800	800	86,600
Registered articles	800	1,550	2,300	3,100	86	5	8,250
Air mail articles	50	200	300	1,500	100	400	2,550
Parcels post ...	1,633	20	508	10	86	5	2,262
Totals ...	74,483	28,770	91,108	47,610	6,186	6,505	254,662

Radio-Telegraph.

The Condominium Government maintains a radio-telegraph station at Vila. The station is powered at 1½ kilo-watts and the call sign is FJX. A new transmitting and receiving set is on order. Reception and transmission are carried out on wave-lengths of 17 and 40 metres and 21 and 37 metres respectively and also on the 600 and 800 metre bands. A daily service is maintained with the station at Suva, Fiji (VPD and VRP), and with the French Government station at Noumea, New Caledonia (FJP). The terminal charge of the Vila station is 3d. per word. The rates per word for telegrams despatched from Vila to Australia and the United Kingdom are as follows:—

To	*Ordinary.*	*Code.*	*Deferred.*	*D.L.T.*	*X.L.T.*
Australia ...	1s.	8d.	—	—	8d.
United Kingdom	2s. 2d.	1s. 4d.	1s. 1d.	9d. (Minimum charge of 25 words.)	9d. (Minimum charge of 10 words.)

The traffic handled by the Station during the year under report was as follows:—

Class.	Words received.	Words despatched.
Official	21,053	26,395
Official relayed	67	—
Ordinary private	6,896	5,316
Ordinary relayed	4,880	—
Code	10,392	12,369
Code relayed	4,653	—
L.C.	375	350
L.C. relayed...	647	—
D.L.T.	149	329
D.L.T. relayed	29	—
X.L.T.	132	—
X.L.T. relayed	8	—
Totals	49,281	44,759

Total words received and despatched = 94,040.

There are privately owned wireless stations at Norsup (Malekula), Segond Channel (Santo), Ringdove Bay (Epi), and Lenakel (Tanna). These stations communicate with Vila and with inter-island shipping.

Roads.

With the exception of the islands of Efate, Tanna, and Tongoa, there are very few public highways in the Group suitable for wheeled transport. Tanna has several passable unmetalled roads, one of which traverses the island and is motorable. There is also a fair unmetalled road on the island of Tongoa. Vila, the capital and seat of Government, has several semi-metalled and unmetalled roads. These link up with the outlying districts and are all motorable. Most plantations keep motorable tracks for their own use. Some of these are linked up with tracks on other plantations and form useful means of communication.

Telephones.

Telephone communication is established only in the town of Vila and the outlying districts. The system is operated by a central exchange and the service is continuous. There are 63 telephones and 96 miles of wire.

The average annual subscription rate is £4 (unlimited calls).

XII.—PUBLIC WORKS.

The Public Works Department staff normally consists of a Superintendent of Works and an Assistant, a European lorry driver (who also acts as foreman), a native roller driver and a small native road gang. In the absence of the Superintendent of Works or his Assistant, District Agents supervise public works being carried out in their respective areas.

The chief duties of the Public Works Department of the Condominium are the care and maintenance of Condominium roads, buildings, bridges, shipping lights, and the supervision of any new works undertaken. Most works are executed by contracts in various forms. In the case of roads these are generally in conjunction with work performed by the road gang and roller.

XIII.—JUSTICE, POLICE, AND PRISONS.

Justice.

The convention of 1914 provided for the immediate introduction of three Courts, namely the Joint Court, and the French and British National Courts, and the subsequent formation of two others—Courts of First Instance and Native Courts.

The scope and functions of these Courts is briefly as follows:—

(1) *Joint Court.*—The Court is composed of a British and a French Judge, with a President of neutral nationality. There is also a Public Prosecutor and a Native Advocate. The Joint Court is a Court of final adjudication in matters of purely Condominium nature. Broadly speaking, and subject to certain exceptions, its civil jurisdiction is confined to certain proceedings in respect of rights over immovable property—its chief function being that of a land Court governing the registration of indefeasable titles to land. It may also settle cases between any parties, native or non-native, brought before it by consent of both. Its criminal jurisdiction, broadly speaking, is confined to offences (*a*) connected with the recruitment of native labourers, (*b*) committed by natives against non-natives, (*c*) committed by natives against natives in areas where the Native Code is in force and involving a penalty of over one year's confinement, and (*d*) against the Convention, or Joint Regulations passed in pursuance thereof, committed in areas where no Court of First Instance exists.

There is an appeal to the Joint Court from all judgments of Courts of First Instance and from important civil judgments of Native Courts. The Joint Court also has certain revisionary powers in criminal cases of Native Courts, and judgments of Courts of First Instance involving sentence of imprisonment.

(2) *Courts of First Instance.*—The composition of these Courts consists of a British and a French District Agent with an assessor of the nationality or legal system of the accused, chosen by lot, from a selected list. Their jurisdiction is over breaches of the 1914 Convention, or of Joint Regulations made thereunder, except those connected with the recruitment of native labour.

(3) *Native Courts.*—These are composed of either a British or French District Agent, assisted by two native Assessors. The British and French Agents preside over the Courts in turn,

month and month about. A necessary corollary to the full and complete functioning of these Courts is the promulgation in the area concerned of the Native Code.

(4) *and* (5) *National Courts.*—The British and French Governments have established in the Group, in conformity with their existing legal systems, Courts with jurisdiction over all civil cases, other than those reserved to the Joint Court, and over all criminal cases in which a non-native is the defendant. In civil cases the jurisdiction over actions between non-natives belongs in some cases to the Court of the Power under whose law the contract was concluded, or the act or thing in question originated, and in other cases to the Court of the Power to which the defendant belongs. In criminal cases, non-natives are justiciable by the Court of their own nationality or the nationality applied to them.

Courts of First Instance have so far been set up in Central Districts Nos. 1 and 2 and the Northern Districts.

Non-natives of neither British or French nationality must opt within one month of arrival for the British or French legal system.

A Code of Native Criminal Law has been instituted and two Native Courts—one in the Central District No. 1 and one in the Southern District—have been formed to administer Penal Law only within their competence and jurisdiction.

There are two practising lawyers in the Group, one British and one French.

The following judgments, other than civil, were recorded by the various Courts:—

	Nature of Judgment.	
	Fine.	*Imprisonment.*
Joint Court	7*	1
Courts of First Instance	37	—
Native Courts	24	44
Resident Commissioner's Court ...	1	71
British National Court...	1	—
Totals	70	116

* Includes two Courts of First Instance revisions.

Police.

The policing of the Group is carried out by two separate forces of armed native constabulary, British and French, each in the charge of a National Commandant under the orders of the respective Resident Commissioners. The headquarters are at Vila, and small detachments are located at the District Agencies on the islands of Tanna, Malekula, and Santo, respectively, in order to assist the District Agents in the carrying out of their duties.

The British force is composed of natives recruited from the islands of the New Hebrides, and the French force mainly of New Hebrideans with a few Loyalty Islanders. In addition, the French have enrolled a number of Tonkinese police for the purpose of facilitating police operations among the Tonkinese coolies in the Group. The respective strengths of the British and French native constabularies are 40 and 40 non-commissioned officers and men.

The duties of the native constabulary consist in the maintenance of law and order among the native population of the more civilized areas, general police and patrol work and guarding of native prisoners, and the repression of native disorders.

Both the British and French Commandants, in addition to their duties as police officers of the Condominium, also act as police officers in so far as their own nationals are concerned, and are charged with the conduct of police cases before their respective National Courts.

The cost of the maintenance of the two forces is defrayed by the respective National Governments, except when the two corps are acting jointly, when the expenses are met from Condominium funds.

The usual term of enlistment for natives of the Group is two years. Some re-engage for further terms.

Prisons.

Each Government maintains its own national prison, which is situated in the town of Vila, and accommodation is provided for both natives and whites. The cost of maintenance of prisoners sentenced by the national tribunals is met from national funds, and that of natives sentenced by the Resident Commissioners and the Native and Mixed Courts, from Condominium funds.

There is no Condominium prison staff. Each Commandant acts as prison keeper and is responsible for the supervision of prisoners placed in his charge. He is assisted by police constables who act as warders.

In addition to the national prisons at headquarters each District Agency is provided out of Condominium funds with a temporary lock-up in which natives under short sentences are confined.

The class of native prisoner with which the Administration is called upon to deal is almost exclusively confined to those sentenced for breaches of local liquor laws and offenders against the provisions of the Native Penal Code.

Native prisoners are employed on works of general utility, such as the making and cleaning of roads, weeding Government paddocks, transport of material to various Government buildings, etc.

The daily average of native prisoners confined in the British prison was 7·40 and in the French prison 6. No deaths occurred in the British prison. Generally speaking, the health of prisoners was good.

XIV.—LEGISLATION.

The following legislative Acts came into force during the year:—

(*a*) *Joint Regulation No.* 1 *of* 1937.—Revises and consolidates the law regarding Trading Licences.

(*b*) *Joint Regulation No.* 2 *of* 1937.—Constitutes a Court of First Instance in the Northern District.

(*c*) *Joint Regulation No.* 3 *of* 1937.—Permitted the use of dynamite for fishing in certain areas. This measure has been disallowed.

(*d*) *Joint Regulation No.* 4 *of* 1937.—Suspends the obligation to procure a permit for purchase of liquor.

(*e*) *Joint Regulation No.* 5 *of* 1937.—Establishes the rule of the road at crossings.

(*f*) *Joint Regulation No.* 6 *of* 1937.—Provides a control for animals affected with tetanus and for the disposal of those which succumb.

(*g*) *Joint Regulation No.* 7 *of* 1937.—Amends the inter-Empire rate of postal tariff.

XV.—BANKING, CURRENCY, AND WEIGHTS AND MEASURES.

There are no banks in the New Hebrides. The Condominium Government, the National Administrations, commercial houses, most traders, and private individuals of any substance do their banking in Australia and New Caledonia. Others make use of certain facilities provided by the more important commercial houses.

The official currencies of the New Hebrides are English and French. Both are legal tender up to the amounts permitted in England and France. Bank notes of the Banque de Indochine, Noumea, are accepted *pari passu* with those of the Bank of France, which guarantees them. Australian currency has been officially recognized as a substitute for sterling at the market rate of exchange. Sterling currency is not often seen, Australian having become the chief medium of commerce in the Group since its devaluation below sterling parity. All three currencies are accepted for each other at the current rate of exchange.

The British and French systems of weights and measures are both employed throughout the Group.

XVI.—PUBLIC FINANCE AND TAXATION.

By Article 5 of the Convention of 1914 each of the two Powers is required to defray the expenses of its own Administration in the Group. The cost of the joint services is defrayed from local revenue. The joint services include finance, posts and telegraphs, customs, public works, ports and harbours, public health, the Joint Court and the Summary Courts, and the Lands Registry. In the event of revenue from local taxation proving insufficient to meet jointly approved expenditure, the two Signatory Powers contribute the deficit in equal proportions. Since the year 1921 such contributions were required in the years 1931, 1932, 1933, 1934 and 1935.

Revenue and Expenditure.

CONDOMINIUM REVENUE.

Year.	French currency. Fcs.		British currency. £	Remarks.
1933	1,379,644	or	11,126	Converted at fixed rate of fcs. 124 = £1.
1934	1,329,249	or	10,719	
1935			23,008	Current rate of exchange.
1936			22,220	
1937			27,729	

CONDOMINIUM EXPENDITURE.

Year.	French currency. Fcs.		British currency. £	Remarks.
1933	2,358,346	or	19,019	Converted at fixed rate of fcs. 124 = £1.
1934	2,884,240	or	23,362	
1935			26,102	Current rate of exchange.
1936			21,866	
1937			21,980	

The chief sources of Condominium Revenue are import and export taxes, which normally account for some four-fifths of the receipts. Other sources of income are postal and telegraphic receipts, port dues, court fees and fines, survey fees, trading licences, taxes on vehicles, Land Registry fees and miscellaneous receipts.

The following is a brief table of the principal import duties current during the year:—

General merchandise, unspecified	12	per cent. *ad valorem*.
Gramophones, records, perfumery, lace, rifles, revolvers, and cartridges ...	20	
Spirits	30	
Tobacco	50	
Wines	5 to 12	
Petrol, lubricating and combustible oils ...	10	
Kerosene	6	
Shotguns and cartridges, detonators ...	100	
Beer	1s. per gallon.	
Dynamite	1s. 10d. per lb.	
Fuse	6d. per 24 feet.	

No duty is levied on the following articles:—official uniforms and robes, live stock, books, cereals and seeds, ship biscuits, coal, fertilizers, medical appliances and drugs for hospitals, microscopes, plants, vaccines and lymphs, fresh vegetables and fruit.

The main heads of taxation and actual yields for the year 1937 are tabulated as follows:—

	£
Inland Revenue (trading and other licences) ...	955
Post Office	696
Port dues	935
Court and survey fees	409
Import duties	21,146
Export duties	1,604
Wireless telegraph (gross)	1,078
Lands Registry	170

EXPENDITURE ON SERVICES ENTIRELY BRITISH.

	£
1933–34	8,615
1934–35	9,346
1935–36	9,422
1936–37	9,586
1937–38	9,453

This expenditure is defrayed from funds provided by Parliament on Civil Estimates, Vote for Colonial and Middle Eastern Services, Class II (9). Revenue consists of miscellaneous receipts, such as Court fees and fines, and rent, totalling approximately a hundred pounds annually. The expenditure on British services includes the personal emoluments of the British national staff, Police Force, and District Agents, and maintenance of houses of officers and police barracks.

The French Government maintains at national expense services similar to the above.

XVII.—MISCELLANEOUS.

Lands and Survey.

Land owned by settlers in the New Hebrides was acquired originally from native owners, either by purchase or barter. Ownership at the present day is based on these native deeds, but such deeds do not constitute a valid title until judgment has been pronounced upon them by the Joint Court. The procedure in regard to obtaining indefeasible titles to land in the New Hebrides is set out in articles 22 to 27 of the Protocol of 1914. Approximately 1,000 claims have been lodged in the Joint Court representing an area of 2,150,000 acres, more or less. Many of these claims are overlapping or conflicting.

The adjudication of land claims on Efate was completed during 1932 and the majority of claims in the Southern Islands similarly dealt with during 1933 and 1934. During 1934 the survey of Epi and adjacent islands was commenced and was still in progress at the end of 1937.

The speed with which claims are dealt with is subordinate to a large extent to the progress of land surveys of the properties affected, and to the extent of complication of opposition.

A staff of surveyors is attached to the Court, but owing to the difficult nature of the country to be surveyed and identified, progress is necessarily slow. For financial reasons the staff of surveyors has lately been kept at a minimum.

In the adjudication of land claims, due consideration is given to the needs of the indigenous population that may be occupying lands coming up for registration. The Court instructs its surveyors to report on such matters in the course of their work, and is guided by such reports in deciding the desirability or necessity for making native reserves. The Anglo-French Protocol provides for the appointment of an official Native Advocate by the two Governments, whose duty it is to watch over native interests in land matters, to bring to the notice of the Court instances of usurpation of native land by settlers, and to assist natives in opposing claims before the Court. The Torrens system of land registration has been adapted to the New Hebrides.

General.

The Group was visited during June by His Excellency Sir Arthur Richards, K.C.M.G., British High Commissioner in the New Hebrides, who was accompanied by Mr. H. H. Vaskess, M.B.E., Secretary to the Western Pacific High Commission, and Dr. A. H. B. Pearce, the Central Medical Authority of the Western Pacific High Commission. His Excellency's party came direct from Suva in H.M.S. *Leith* (Captain L. C. P. Tudway, R.N.), of the New Zealand Station, and left the Group on the same vessel at the conclusion of their visit.

A visit was also received during April from His Excellency Monsieur Marchessou, French High Commissioner in the New Hebrides. His Excellency travelled on board the French Naval Sloop *Rigault de Genouilly*.

APPENDIX.

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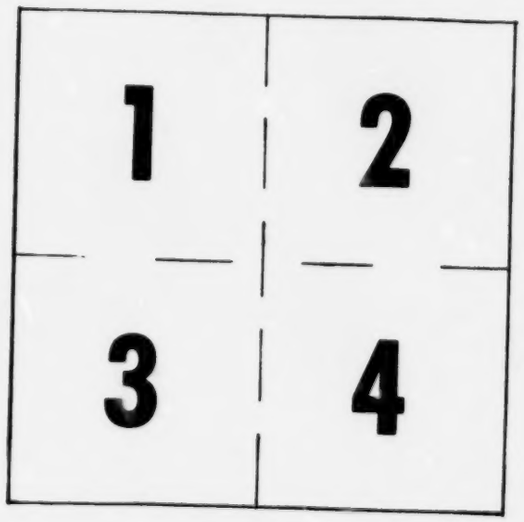

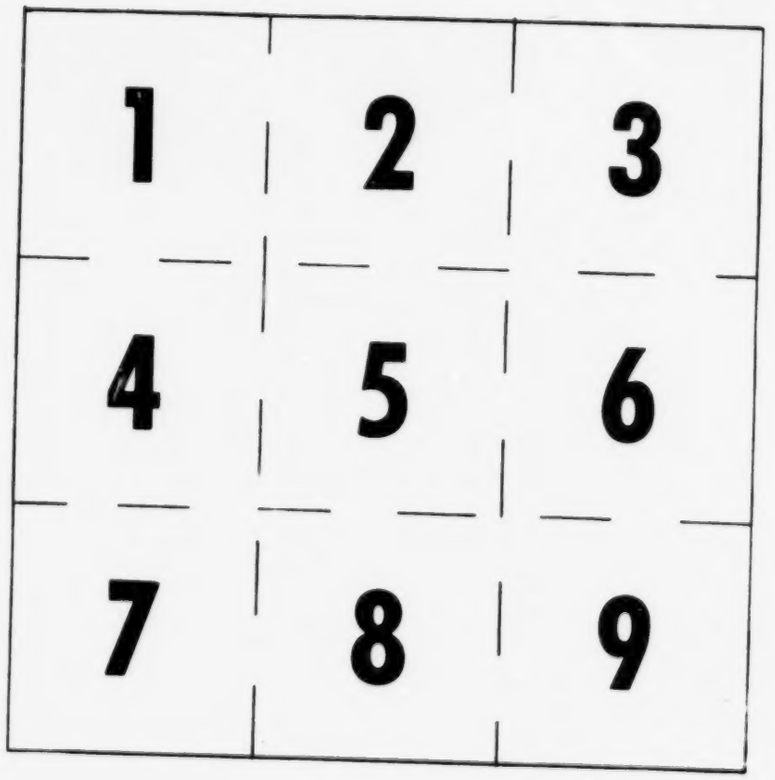

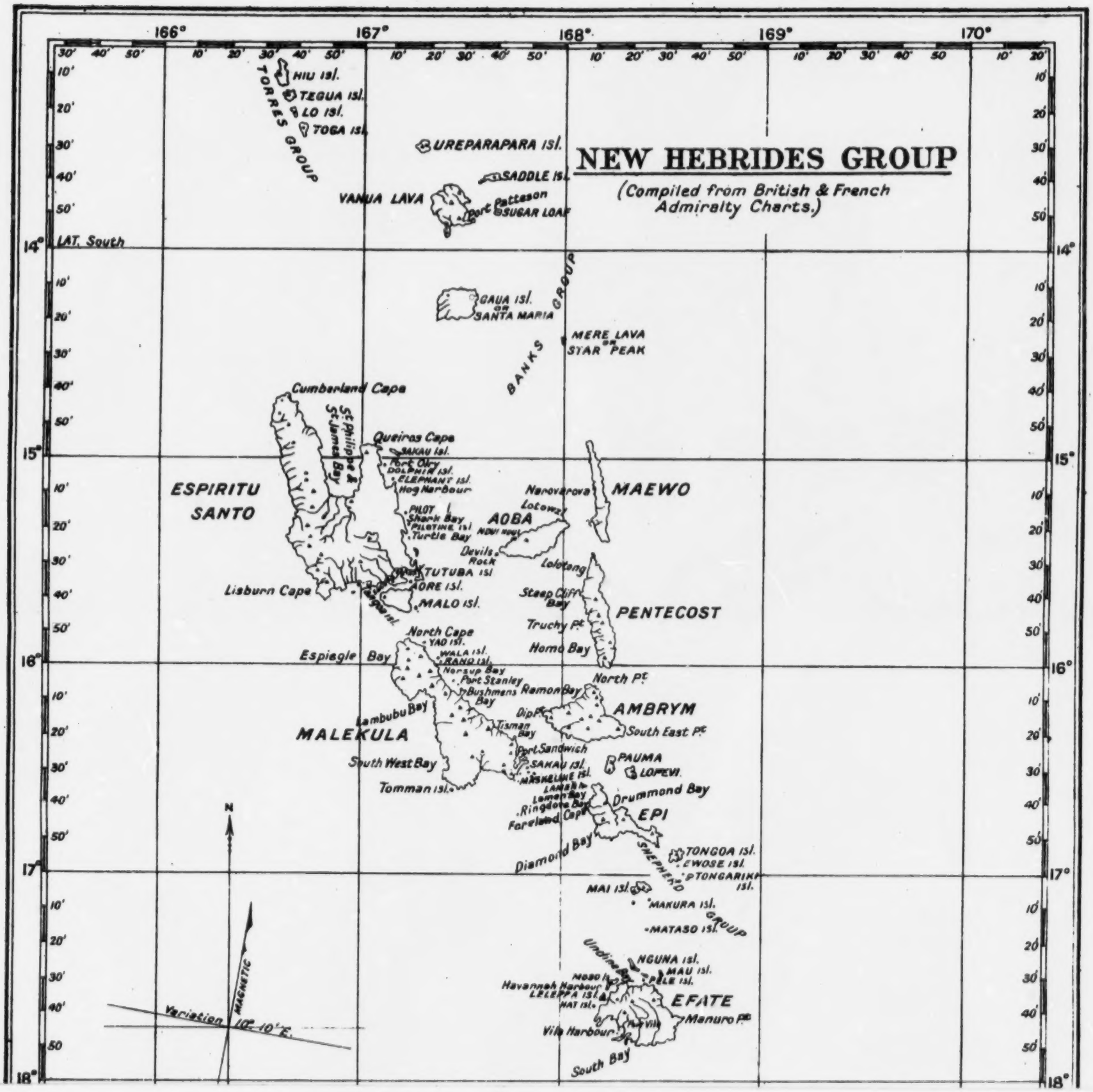
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(Compiled from British & French Admiralty Charts.)
166°
167°
168°
169°
170°
14°
15°
16°
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LAT. South
TORRES GROUP
HIU ISL.
TEGUA ISL.
LO ISL.
TOGA ISL.
UREPARAPARA ISL.
SADDLE ISL.
VANUA LAVA
Port Patteson
SUGAR LOAF
GAUA ISL. OR SANTA MARIA
BANKS GROUP
MERE LAVA OR STAR PEAK
Cumberland Cape
St. Philippe & St. James Bay
Queiros Cape
SAKAU ISL.
Port Olry
DOLPHIN ISL.
ELEPHANT ISL.
Hog Harbour
ESPIRITU SANTO
PILOT
Shark Bay
PILOTINE ISL.
Turtle Bay
Nararorova
MAEWO
Lotowai
AOBA
NOW HOW
Devils Rock
TUTUBA ISL.
AORE ISL.
MALO ISL.
Lisburn Cape
Lolotang
Steep Cliff Bay
PENTECOST
Truchy Pt.
North Cape
YAO ISL.
WALA ISL.
RANO ISL.
Espiegle Bay
Horno Bay
Norsup Bay
Port Stanley
Bushmens Bay
Ramon Bay
North Pt.
AMBRYM
Lambubu Bay
MALEKULA
Dip Pt.
Tisman Bay
South East Pt.
Port Sandwich
South West Bay
SAKAU ISL.
PAUMA
LOPEVI
MASHELAVE ISL.
Tomman ISL.
LAMEN B.
Lamen Bay
Ringdove Bay
Drummond Bay
Foreland Cape
EPI
Diamond Bay
SHEPHERD GROUP
TONGOA ISL.
EWOSE ISL.
TONGARIKI ISL.
MAI ISL.
MAKURA ISL.
MATASO ISL.
Undine Bay
NGUNA ISL.
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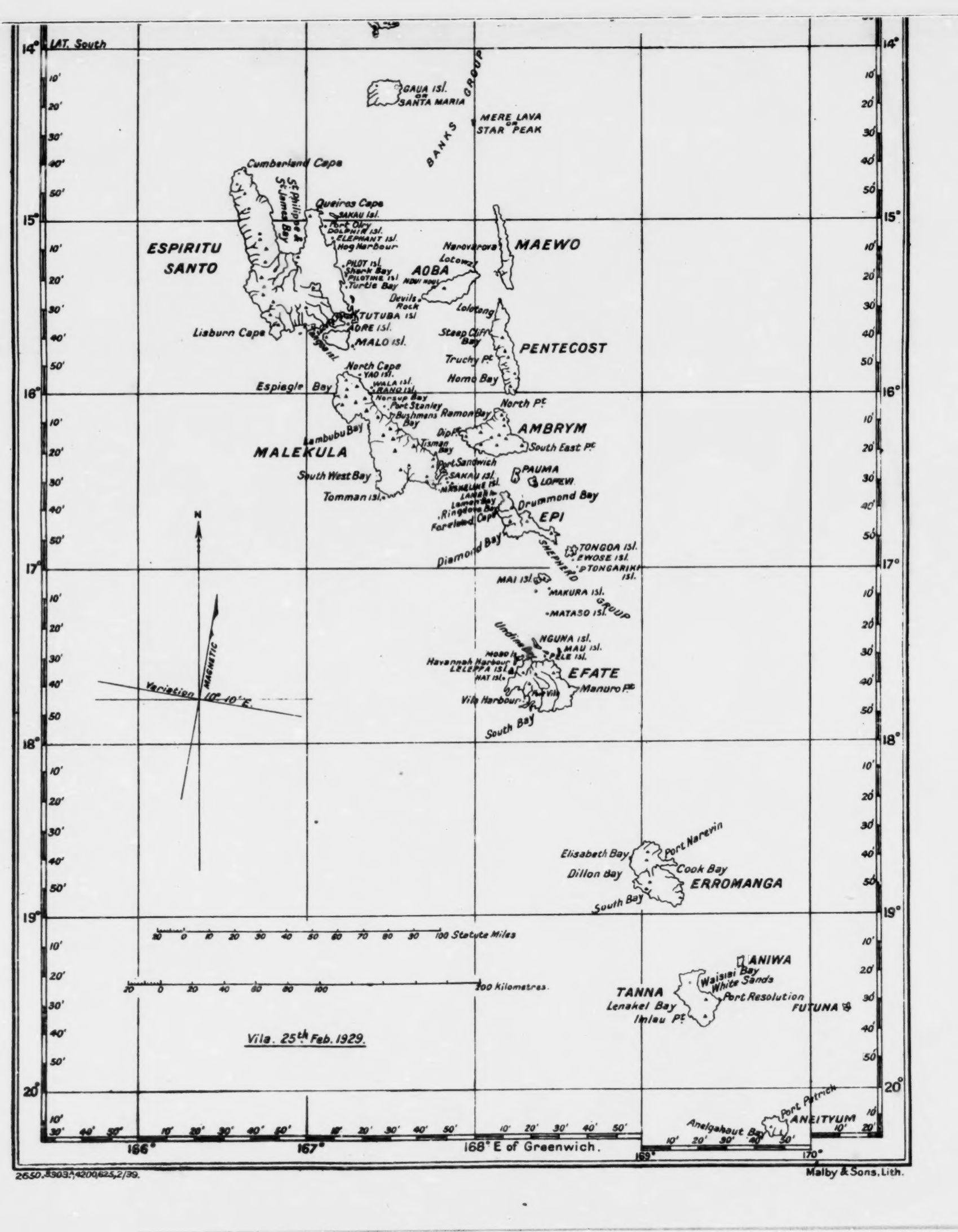

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ANNUAL REPORT ON THE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC PROGRESS OF THE PEOPLE OF THE NEW HEBRIDES, 1938

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I.—GEOGRAPHY, CLIMATE, AND HISTORY.

Geography.

The New Hebrides lie between the 13th and 21st degrees of South latitude, and the 166th and 170th degrees of East longitude, and are of an area of, roughly, 5,700 square miles.

The New Hebrides include the Banks and Torres Groups, the former lying a few miles due north of the main Group, and the latter about 40 miles to the north-west of the Banks, the whole forming an irregular double chain some 440 miles in length.

The largest islands of the Group are Santo and Malekula, the former having an area of approximately 1,500 square miles, and a coastline of about 200 miles. Both islands are mountainous and rugged, parts of Santo rising to over 6,000 feet.

Other larger islands in their order of importance are Efate, Ambrym, Erromanga, Epi, Aoba, Pentecost and Maeovo, and Gaua and Vanua Lava of the Banks Group. In addition to these are some 60 small islands and islets.

There are three active volcanoes in the Group situated on the islands of Tanna, Ambrym, and Lopevi, respectively. The first two are in a constant state of activity, emitting smoke and vapour at irregular intervals. Ambrym volcano periodically erupts with great severity.

The Group possesses four good harbours, Vila and Havannah Harbours situated on the island of Efate, and Ports Sandwich and Stanley on Malekula, beside a number of good sheltered

anchorages such as the Segond Channel and Pallicollo on Santo, Ringdove Bay on Epi, The Maskelynes off South Malekula, Undine Bay on Efate, and Anelgahaut on Aneityum.

The Headquarters of the Administration are situated at Vila, which is also the chief commercial centre of the Group. Other important settlements are located at Epi, Malekula, and the Segond Channel, Santo.

The Group is generally well watered. On the larger islands are several small rivers navigable to boats and small motor craft for a distance of some miles. The only lake of any size in the Group is found on top of the island of Gaua in the Banks Group, and is some four miles in circumference.

Climate.

The New Hebrides islands are classed as unhealthy. The climate, although very enervating is not worse than that of many other tropical places. The year is divided up, generally speaking, into two seasons, the hot and wet season, commencing in November and ending in April, and the dry and cool season from May to October. Of late, however, the tendency is for the line of demarcation to become less clear, there being considerable periods of drought in the rainy season and vice versa in the dry season. The temperature in the island of Efate ranges from a minimum of about 60° F. in the cool season to a maximum of about 92° F. in the hot. The hot season is the most unhealthy owing to the extreme humidity and the prevalence of mosquitoes. Also it is so enervating as to make recovery from an illness somewhat prolonged. The cool season is, generally speaking, healthy and pleasant. The southern islands of the Group are cooler and healthier than the northern —the latter being about 7° F. warmer on the average. Rainfall increases the nearer the equator is approached, and varies from some 50 inches in the extreme South to over 200 inches in the extreme North of the Group.

History.

The New Hebrides Group was discovered by the Spanish explorer de Quiros in the year 1606. Under the impression that he had at last found the long-sought Southern Continent, the quest for which occupied the navigators of this period, he called it " Tierra Austrialia del Espiritu Santo ". He anchored in a large bay to which he gave the name of St. Phillip and St. James, and on the shores of a river flowing into that bay he established the settlement of La Nuova Jerusalem. To the port which undoubtedly existed in those days he gave the name of Vera Cruz. This island is to-day known as Santo. Owing to sickness and dissensions with the natives the settlement was soon abandoned, and to-day, so far as is known, no traces of it exist. The port of Vera Cruz has likewise disappeared; nor

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can its original site be traced along the 40 odd miles of coast-line forming the bay.

Nothing more was heard of the Group until some 160 years later, when, in 1768, the French navigator Bougainville passed to the southward of de Quiros's discovery, and sailed between the islands known to-day as Santo and Malekula, thus disproving de Quiros's claims to the discovery of the great Southern Continent. The strait through which he passed still bears his name. On the same voyage he discovered the islands of Pentecost, Aoba, and Maeovo, to which he gave the name of the Cyclades.

It remained, however, for the great navigator Captain Cook to discover and chart the greater part of the Group in the year 1774, when, entering the Group from the north, he sailed to the southward, discovering and naming the majority of the islands which form the southern chain of the Group. It is recorded that among other places visited he spent some 15 days in the then snug little harbour of Port Resolution on the island of Tanna. Since those days, however, the floor of the harbour has risen, and where Captain Cook anchored in four fathoms of water, to-day a small launch will scarcely float.

Among other early visitors may be cited Laperouse who is supposed to have visited the Group in 1788; and d'Entracasteaux, who came in search of Laperouse in 1793.

In the same year the Banks Islands were sighted by Bligh on the occasion of his famous voyage in an open boat to Timor after the mutiny of the *Bounty*.

Dumont d'Urville, Belcher, and Markham are among the early voyagers whose accounts of these islands are of interest.

By virtue of the Anglo-French convention of 16th November, 1887, whereby, among other things, each nation agreed not to exercise a separate control over the Group, a Joint Naval Commission was appointed, consisting of the respective Captains and two Officers from each of the two warships which then paid periodical visits to the Group. The commission was charged with the protection of the lives and property of the subjects of the two nations—France and England—in the islands.

By the year 1895 a number of British and French subjects had settled in the Group and the necessity was felt for some jurisdiction to deal with their disputes, in consequence of which an Arbitration Court was established by the colonists, but the Joint Naval Commission pronounced its veto and the Court was dissolved.

In 1902 the Group had assumed sufficient importance to necessitate the appointment of Resident Commissioners to deal with such judicial cases as came within their jurisdiction. In 1902 the first British Resident Commissioner was appointed, the French Government having a short time previously appointed a similar officer.

II.—GOVERNMENT.

By the Convention of 20th October, 1906, between the United Kingdom and France, British-French Condominium Government was established. The executive consists of a British and French Resident Commissioner acting in concert, each assisted by a staff of officers. The Administrative Departments of the Condominium are staffed by Officers of both nationalities who are subject to the control of the Resident Commissioners acting jointly. Each power retains sovereignty over its own nationals. The seat of Government is at Vila on the island of Efate. Condominium Agents of both nationalities are established on various islands of the Group and are allotted joint areas of control. The executive must in all cases reach joint agreement in decisions affecting the administration of the Condominium. The Principal Condominium Judicial body is the Joint Court which is composed of a British and a French Judge with a President of neutral nationality. The joint services include the Joint Court, finance, posts and telegraphs, customs, public health, lands registry, and public works.

The Convention of 1906 has been superseded by the Convention of 6th August, 1914, which was ratified in 1922.

The British and French Resident Commissioners are subordinate to their respective British and French High Commissioners. The British High Commissioner is stationed at Suva, and the French High Commissioner at Noumea.

III.—POPULATION.

The population of the New Hebrides is composed of some 40,000 natives and 3,119 non-natives. A statement is appended giving details of the non-native population.

Description.	*British.*			*French.*			*Totals.*
	Adult Males.	*Females and Children.*	*Total.*	*Adult Males.*	*Females and Children.*	*Total.*	
Nationals ...	108	111	219	246	441	687	906
Foreigners opted under Protocol	6	5	11	16	2	18	29
Asiatics opted under Protocol	42	20	62	69	29	98	160
Protected subjects and citizens :—							
Tonkinese	—	—	—	1,593	430	2,023	2,023
Samoan ...	1	—	1	—	—	—	1
Totals ...	157	136	293	1,924	902	2,826	3,119

Of the European population, some 420 French and 63 British reside on the island of Efate, mainly in and around the town of Vila. Santo is the next important centre and carries about 22 British and 220 French. The balance is distributed throughout the Group. The European population of the southern part of the Group is mainly British, amounting to 27 persons; of this number 22 reside on the island of Tanna (13 British and 9 French).

The Chinese and Japanese community number 93 and 67 respectively and are centred in and around the town of Vila.

The primitive state of the interior of some of the islands of the New Hebrides precludes the taking of any reliable census of the indigenous population.

Malekula is credited with the largest population, some 9,000 natives. Next come Santo and Pentecost, about 7,000 each; Tanna, 6,500; Aoba, 6,000; Ambrym, 4,000; Epi, 2,500; and Efate, 2,000. Among the smaller islands whose population is worthy of note may be cited Paama with just over 2,000, and Tongoa with 1,300 inhabitants.

In general the native population of the Group is on the decline, but for some years the islands of Tanna, Paama, and Tongoa have shown a small increase, which is still maintained. In this connexion it is interesting to note that the natives of these islands appear to be endowed with keener intelligence than their fellows, which, coupled with increased activity, may have some bearing on their present immunity from decline.

IV.—HEALTH.

Extract of Chief Condominium Medical Officer's Report for 1938.

No cases of plague, cholera, yellow fever or smallpox were reported during the year, nor were any vessels quarantined for any of these diseases.

As in previous years malaria predominated, but deaths resulting therefrom were not above the average. Certain islands, hitherto considered immune from malaria, in particular Tongoa, suffered considerably and a number of deaths were recorded.

An outbreak of bacillary dysentery occurred on the island of Santo which occasioned several deaths among the natives of that island.

The treatment of yaws has been energetically carried out and results are encouraging. Natives are showing much less reluctance in coming forward for injections.

Hookworm is common throughout the Group. During the course of a medical tour on the island of Tongoa, the inhabitants were treated for this disease.

Of maladies common to natives and Europeans alike influenza is the most important, and is often attended with serious results

among the undernourished natives of the interior of certain islands, among whom pulmonary complications are of frequent occurrence.

Mild outbreaks of whooping cough occurred in Malekula, frequently followed in the case of children with pulmonary complications.

A few cases of chicken pox and measles of a mild character occurred.

Pulmonary tuberculosis is found in all districts of the Group.

Venereal disease has been noticed but not to any great extent.

Organization of Services.

The Medical organization of the New Hebrides may be grouped under:—

(1) The French Government Medical Service,

(2) British Mission Medical Service,

(3) The Condominium Medical Service, which consists of officers of (1) and (2) above, who receive allowances from Condominium funds for certain medical and health duties, plus Native Medical Practitioners.

There are seven European doctors, six hospitals and three medical aid posts in the Group. The location of the latter is as follows:—

Southern Islands.

Tanna.—A well-equipped hospital run by the Presbyterian Mission, assisted by a grant from British funds. A British medical practitioner is in charge of the hospital. There is also a small French hospital in charge of an officer of the French Medical Service. A leper segregation area is established on Tanna under the auspices of the Condominium Government and treatment is given.

Central Islands.

Efate.—There are two good hospitals at Vila, the John G. Paton Memorial Hospital, administered by the Presbyterian Mission and assisted by a grant from British funds, and the French Government hospital. These hospitals have trained European staffs and are in charge of qualified medical officers. The French Government has recently erected a new non-European wing at the French Hospital.

Malekula.—There is a French Government hospital at Norsup and a European medical officer is in charge. At Port Sandwich there is a French Government medical aid post.

Northern Islands.

Santo.—The French Government have established a hospital in the Segond Channel, Santo, with a European medical officer in charge and European staff.

Aoba and Pentecost.—The Melanesian Mission has completed its hospital at Lolowai and this replaces one medical aid post. There are two medical aid posts belonging to the same mission, one on Aoba and one on Pentecost. It is hoped soon to appoint a resident medical officer.

All these institutions are open to the indigenous population as well as to white residents and Asiatics

STATISTICS, 1938.

Cases.	*British Hospital Vila*			*French Hospitals (amalgamated).*		
	European.	*Natives and Asiatics.*	*Total.*	*European.*	*Natives and Asiatics.*	*Total.*
In-patients ...	49	516	565	331	2,181	2,512
Out-patients ...	—	1,954	1,954	976	4,677	5,653
Total ...	49	2,470	2,519	1,307	6,858	8,165
Deaths ...	1	17	18	13	85	98

Sanitation.

Sanitation in the islands of the Group is still in the early stages of development, but progress continues to be made at Vila, the capital, where services have been organized respectively to kerosene rain water tanks (the only present water supply) and other breeding places of mosquitoes, clear the continually growing bush throughout the town, and collect and dispose of refuse. These services have undoubtedly contributed greatly to the improvement of the health of the community.

All Government houses in Vila are supplied with septic tanks and the system is gradually being adopted by private individuals and commercial firms, instead of the pit system of latrine.

Sanitary legislation provides *inter alia* for the inspection of meat for human consumption, the inspection of public and private premises, the approval of plans for new dwelling houses, and obliges householders to keep their premises free from undergrowth and refuse.

V.—HOUSING.

Houses occupied by Europeans in the Group are usually of the one storey bungalow type of two or more rooms surrounded by verandahs. They are generally constructed of wood and galvanized iron. Owing to the frequency of earthquake shocks buildings of brick, stone, or concrete are not favoured.

In the more civilized areas natives are gradually adapting themselves to European ideas of construction, and a marked improvement in native dwelling houses is noticeable in villages adjacent to Vila.

In the outlying islands, mission natives favour dwelling houses constructed of lime mortar, which is a great improvement on the grass or leaf hut of former days, and far more comfortable and sanitary.

The non-mission or heathen native still clings to the insanitary grass or leaf shelter accommodating the whole of his family, and, more often than not, his pigs and dogs as well. But with the gradual advance of civilization this system is being discarded in favour of the more substantial dwellings above mentioned.

The building of houses, etc., in the town of Vila is governed by the provision of a Town Conservancy Regulation which requires all plans of projected dwelling houses to be passed by a Sanitary Commission.

VI.—NATURAL RESOURCES.

The New Hebrides have an area of approximately 5,700 square miles, parts of which are mountainous and unsuitable for cultivation. Though no accurate figures are available it is estimated that European owned plantations consist of approximately 33,000 acres under coconuts, 9,000 acres under cocoa, 7,000 acres under coffee and 125 acres under miscellaneous produce. In addition to this, larger areas, of which no estimate is available, are under coconuts and indigenous food crops of various kinds cultivated and owned by natives.

The produce of the Group may be roughly divided into export products and local food products.

The chief export products are copra, coffee, cocoa, shell and sandalwood. A comparative table of all exports is given at the end of Chapter VII. Coffee, cocoa, cotton and wool are entirely produced by European concerns. About five-sixths of the copra is produced by European plantations and one-sixth by individual natives. These are the only industries in the Group which may be said to be organized. Shell, béche de mer and sandalwood are exported, but are obtained by traders and commercial houses from individual natives and Asiatics. Hides are a by-product of slaughter for meat consumption and the quantity exported is small. Coconuts are occasionally exported by plantations when the market is favourable. Of the products mentioned above as being exported, coconuts are of course also locally consumed as well as a small quantity of coffee.

Traces of minerals of various kinds have been found in the Group, but there has been no development in this direction.

There is no organized fishing industry. Apart from shell fishing by natives and Asiatics, a small quantity of fish is caught for local consumption.

The only livestock industry is a sheep station, running about 3,000 head of sheep, on the island of Erromanga. Cattle are raised on plantations primarily for the purpose of keeping down scrub, but they are also the source of local fresh meat and milk supplies.

Vegetables of many kinds are produced by Chinese market gardeners around Vila, and also by private individuals in lesser quantities, for local consumption.

A considerable variety of foods is produced by natives for their own use. Chief among these are coconuts, yams, taro, manioc, breadfruit, bananas, pawpaws and pineapples. Oranges, lemons, limes, avocada pears, custard apples and many edible nuts and roots are found in fair quantity throughout the Group, but most of these are not specially cultivated.

No reliable estimates of quantities and values of products consumed or used locally exist.

Land is held by non-natives by virtue of sales from natives. Registration of titles so acquired is now in process, but will take many years to complete. All land not thus acquired remains vested in the native. Sales of land to non-natives and the registration of land titles are governed by the Anglo-French Protocol 1914. There is no separate legislation governing mineral and water rights.

There is no organized forestry in the Group, but many valuable trees exist including sandalwood, kauri, teak and a variety of other useful hardwoods, but as yet, with the exception of sandalwood, these have been little exploited.

Native and Asiatic export products are universally sold to traders and commercial houses in exchange for cash or goods. There are no co-operative systems. Plantations usually sell their produce to or through commercial houses, but in a few cases make their own export and sales arrangements.

VII.—COMMERCE.

The New Hebrides may be said to be virtually self-supporting in essential foodstuffs, there being a sufficiency of fresh meat, milk, vegetables, fruit and native foods for the needs of the Europeans, Asiatic and native population. The only foodstuffs of which there are extensive importations are sugar, flour, rice and tinned meats and fish, a large part of which is used as a convenient means of feeding native and Asiatic labour on plantations and elsewhere. Other foodstuffs imported are chiefly those forming the diets of Europeans and Asiatics and which

are not readily obtainable in the Group, and luxuries. Apart from foodstuffs, all manufactured articles must be imported. The chief imports are tea, beer, wines and spirits, tobacco, petrol, kerosene, gunny bags, building materials, machinery and soap.

The most important export from the Group is copra, which amounted to 11,448 tons valued at £74,921 in 1938, as against 11,746 tons and £101,390 in 1937. After copra next in importance come cocoa (1,893 tons, £28,332; against 1,448 tons, £30,167), coffee (621 tons, £12,876 against 437 tons, £13,745), shell and sandalwood.

Prices during 1938 were mostly lower than in 1937 particularly towards the end of the year. However, the absence of cyclones and favourable weather contributed to a larger outturn, which partly compensated for the loss of income. Shell and sandalwood were often a nominal market owing to conditions caused by the Sino-Japanese conflict.

The following tables are attached:—

I. Comparative table of values of total imports.

II. Comparative table of values of chief imports.

III. Comparative table of proportion of imports from various countries.

IV. Comparative table of quantities and values of exports.

V. Table of destination of exports.

VI. Comparative table of prices of exports.

Imports and exports of coin and bullion are negligible and no tables have been given.

Imports.

COMPARATIVE TABLE OF VALUES OF IMPORTS.

Year.	*British currency.*	*French currency.*	*Remarks.*
	£	Francs.	Converted at francs.
1924	92,201	7,929,327	86 = £
1925	217,863	22,004,232	101 = £
1926	197,840	30,457,405	154 = £
1927	307,939	38,184,562	124 = £
1928	373,797	46,474,828	124 = £*
1929	300,035	37,204,343	124 = £*
1930	157,541	19,535,138	124 = £*
1931	79,997	9,919,635	124 = £*
1932	81,587	10,116,807	124 = £*
1933	85,544	10,607,515	124 = £*
1934	75,993	9,423,132	124 = £*
1935	115,492	8,661,951	Rate of exchange of the day.
1936	123,800	10,056,000	,,
1937	152,722	19,195,524	,,
1938	111,867	19,091,682	,,

* Fixed rate of exchange.

COMPARATIVE TABLE OF CHIEF IMPORTS.

	Principal source of supply.	*1934.* £ (*a*)	*1935.* £ (*b*)	*1936.* £ (*b*)	*1937.* £ (*b*)	*1938.* £ (*b*)
Beer	Australia ...	1,277	1,638	1,060	1,394	1,013
Benzine (petrol)	America and Java	2,024	2,148	2,639	5,674	7,257
Biscuits (ship's)	Australia ...	568	953	728	1,512	852
Tinned goods and groceries	America and Australia ...	1,164	1,766	3,153	4,422	2,927
Cartridges ...	Australia ...	284	153	327	752	193
Tobacco ...	France ... ... Australia ... United Kingdom	3,819	5,126	4,997	5,502	4,307
Cement ...	Japan ... ... Indo China ... Australia ...	1,018	1,311	700	985	1,017
Lubricating oils	America ...	1,570	3,230	959	846	1,794
Spirits... ...	France ... ... United Kingdom	1,845	3,369	1,779	2,043	1,969
Tinned milk ...	Australia ...	759	1,208	908	951	952
Kerosene ...	America ...	1,323	1,814	1,712	4,706	1,672
Rice	Java	3,335	6,737	9,450	11,834	8,470
Flour	Australia ...	2,040	3,472	3,317	4,773	3,057
Sugar	Java	1,316	2,111	2,000	2,213	2,507
Soap	France ... ... Australia ...	416	517	775	1,102	563
Tinned fish ...	Australia ... America ...	590	1,212	1,766	3,325	1,558
Wines (fine) ...	France	511	637	706	1,862	1,526
Wines (ordinaire)	France	1,909	3,092	2,135	2,434	2,245
Gunny bags ...	India	2,084	3,175	4,150	4,626	5,327
Building materials	Australia ...	3,023	6,774	4,512	10,885	9,646
Agricultural machinery, boats, and motor cars.	Australia ... America ...	3,796	8,445	5,869	9,742	6,998
Potatoes ...	Australia ...	351	566	624	633	868
Tea	Australia ...	800	1,089	1,030	1,270	1,020
Fuel oil ...	— ...	—	—	—	1,060	1,424

(*a*) Converted at the fixed rate of 124 francs = £1.

(*b*) Converted at the current rate of exchange. Share of imports of British and French importers respectively 33 per cent. and 67 per cent. by value.

COMPARATIVE TABLE OF PROPORTION OF IMPORTS FROM VARIOUS COUNTRIES.

	1935. *Per cent.*	*1936.* *Per cent.*	*1937.* *Per cent.*	*1938.* *Per cent.*
United Kingdom	2·5	2·25	2·00	2·80
Australia	48·5	70·5	68·30	49·00
Hong Kong	1·25	1·33	1·61	3·00
*France and French Colonies ...	21·00	15·66	18·18	26·00
U.S.A.	12·25	1·66	1·75	7·50
Japan	7·00	5·25	4·34	7·00
Dutch Indies	1·5	1·66	0·85	1·70
Various	6·00	1·75	2·97	3·00

* Increase due chiefly to imports of foreign fuel oils from depot in New Caledonia and rice from Indo China.

COMPARATIVE TABLE OF QUANTITIES AND VALUES OF EXPORTS.

	1934.*		1935.		1936.*		1937.		1938.	
	Tons.	Value. (a) £	Tons.	Value. (b) £	Tons.	Value. (b) £	Tons.	Value. (b) £	Tons.	Value. (b) £
Copra	6,939	14,886	9,859	61,783	10,424	90,171	11,746	101,390	11,448	74,921
Cocoa	1,728	19,512	2,672	42,047	891	12,026	1,448	30,167	1,893	28,332
Coffee	318	9,624	366	19,367	307	13,404	437	13,745	621	12,876
Cotton	19	307	33	966	25	713	6	151	28	497
Trochus and Burghaus shell	130	2,970	98	3,594	106	3,381	58	1,752	77	1,350
Maize	43	209	106	283	1	1	3	3	43	26
Sandalwood	100	1,446	66	1,704	81	1,656	63	902	79	1,215
Wool	9	441	6	515	4	232	4·5	280	5	331
Hides	28	273	23	287	32	302	41	376	43	357
Castor oil seed	29	72	17	69	—	—	—	—	—	—
Coconuts	94	133	40	91	43	120	93	370	61	209
Miscellaneous	200	21	136	188	64	38	133·75	97	55	97
Totals	9,587	49,933	13,423	130,937	11,979	122,068	14,034	149,247	14,353	120,211

(a) Converted at the fixed rate of 124 francs = £1. (b) Converted at the rate of exchange of the day.

* In these years exports were unfavourably affected by cyclones.

Note.—The share of produce exported as British by British firms and planters was 0·2 per cent. and 2·00 per cent. for tonnage and value respectively.

COMPARATIVE TABLE OF DESTINATION OF EXPORTS.

(*By value.*) (*a*)

	1935. Per cent.	1936. Per cent.	1937. Per cent.	1938. Per cent.
To British Empire ...	6·5	8	3·6	1·8
To Foreign Countries ...	93·5	92	96·4	98·2

Countries of Destination.

(*By value.*) (*b*)

	1935. Per cent.	1936. Per cent.	1937. Per cent.	1938. Per cent.
France	91·7	91·5	94·5	97·9
Australia	5·4	6·9	3·2	1·1
New Caledonia	1·8	·5	1·9	·3
China	1·1	1·1	0·4	0·7

COMPARATIVE TABLE OF PRICES OF EXPORTS.

(*Per metric ton.*)

	1934. (*a*) £	1935. (*b*) £	1936. (*b*) £	1937. (*b*) £	1938. (*b*) £
Copra	2·15	6·25	8·65	8·6	6·5
Coffee	32	53	45	31	20·7
Cocoa	11·3	15·6	13·5	21	15
Trochus	28	43	45	40	20·5
Burghaus	6	10	10·6	7·3	7
Wool	68	94	66	62	62
Cotton	18	29·35	28·5	26	17·7

(*a*) Converted at the fixed rate of 124 francs = £1.
(*b*) Converted at the rate of exchange of the day.

VIII.—LABOUR.

Native Labour.

Native labour may be divided into three main classes:—

(*a*) Plantation labour, boats' crews of local small vessels, employees of traders, Government messengers, constabulary, etc., on contract and otherwise;

(*b*) domestic labour;

(*c*) casual labour, working on steamers, wharves, Government works, etc.

The tendency to employ "free labour" (not under contract) is increasing except in the case of certain plantations which have difficulty in obtaining labour near at hand. The growth of a "free" labour market is a satisfactory feature, as it has a tendency to bring the wages and treatment of labour into more exact relationship with prices. It is doubtful, however, if certain plantations would ever be able to be run without a few contracted men at least to ensure the proper harvesting of certain seasonal crops.

The native's aversion to long-term engagements is as pronounced as ever; he prefers to work without engagement if possible, and will not usually bind himself for more than 12 months.

When times are good native labour is exceedingly scarce and dear, as the majority of natives can obtain all they want by the sale of the produce of their lands, and with a minimum of exertion. When times are bad, the point arrives when the native, having exhausted his hoarded savings, cannot without a very great deal of exertion himself, obtain the luxuries he desires. He is then faced with the choice of working for wages or reverting to his natural state in the matter of food (of which there is plenty) and clothing.

Domestic labour remains by comparison difficult to secure, as neither the male nor the female native takes kindly to this form of service and can be rarely prevailed upon to stay with an employer for an extended period.

The employment of natives under engagement of any kind is governed by the provisions of the Protocol of 1914, and, in the case of British dependants, also by national legislation. These instruments contain provision for the treatment and payment of such engaged natives and Joint Regulation No. 1 of 1934 provides that any employer of labour is responsible for the medical treatment of all his native employees, whether engaged or not. Apart from this there is no social legislation.

As may be seen from the statistics that follow, the employment by British settlers of labour under engagement is exceedingly limited. Such labour of this nature as exists was inspected at various times during the year by British District Agents. The conditions of employment were found to be satisfactory and no complaints were received regarding the treatment of native employees, whether engaged or otherwise.

There are no native labour unions.

Statistics of Engagements.

At the end of 1938 there were the following numbers of labourers under engagement:—

Natives.		*Indo-Chinese.*
British.	*French.*	*French.*
75	697	2,023

Asiatic Labour.

Asiatic labour consists of:—

(*a*) Indo-Chinese coolies introduced into the territory by the French Government under contract, for employment by French settlers. These Tonkinese are, generally speaking, satisfactory, being of a superior intelligence to the natives, if not physically so strong. They are naturally hard-workers and receive approximately 80 francs a month, plus food, clothing, lodging, etc. The devaluation of the franc has rendered the cost to the settler lower than that of the native labourer, though, in addition to wages, he has to bear

the cost of transportation to and from Indo-China, Government inspection and medical surveillance, etc. At the end of the year there were 2,023 Indo-Chinese coolies in the Group including 430 women and children.

(*b*) Free Chinese and Japanese labour of the artisan class. These are very few, and work on a day-to-day basis at wages varying according to skill and the demand for labour. Such wages vary from 5s. to 15s. a day. There are also a few Chinese employed as stewards, cooks, and firemen, on inter-island steamers at rates varying from £4 to £10 per month with rations. There are no Asiatic labour unions.

European Labour.

European labour in the ordinary sense does not exist. A few Europeans occasionally undertake paid work for wages, but this is the exception rather than the rule. There is no accepted standard of wages for Europeans and labour unions do not exist.

IX.—WAGES AND COST OF LIVING.

European.

Europeans in the service of Government or trading concerns in Vila are usually provided with free partly-furnished quarters. Other non-natives have to rent or provide their own houses or live in boarding houses. Rents in Vila vary from £5 per month upwards. *En pension* accommodation of inferior quality may be had for approximately 5s. a day. In the interests of health and morale it is desirable for Europeans to maintain as high a standard of living as their means permit in order to combat the effects of climate and monotony. The price level is higher than in Australia. The cost of living outside Vila is somewhat lower owing to facilities for maintaining livestock, poultry, and vegetable gardens, and also the relatively lower cost of native labour.

Chinese and Japanese.

These may be divided up roughly into three classes, namely, small storekeepers, market gardeners and labourers and artisans. Free labour or artisans obtain from 5s. to 15s. a day wages according to skill. There are also a few Chinese employed as cooks, firemen and stewards on the inter-island vessels at rates varying from £4 to £10 per month, with rations. The market gardeners are all Chinese and produce nearly the whole vegetable supply of Vila. Owing to the Asiatic standard the cost of living of this class is lower than that of Europeans, but is sufficiently high to maintain a good standard of health.

Natives.

Natives, generally speaking, live on the produce of their gardens and have in these an abundant and reasonably satisfactory supply of food for no cost except their own toil. This

supply is supplemented, when they can afford it, by imported foodstuffs, for which they are cultivating an increasing taste. They also purchase clothing and other manufactured articles according to the standard they have achieved.

The current rates of wages for native labour are as follows:—

Class (a).

Plantation labourers ...	10s. to £2 per month with food and clothing, whether under engagement or not, sometimes together with piece-work.
Boats' crews...	
Traders' employees	
Government messengers ...	£3 per month without food.
Constabulary	From £2 per month with food and clothing.

Note.—Local casual labour is frequently employed on plantations for picking cotton and seasonal crops on a daily wage from 1s. to 2s. with or without food, according to arrangement.

Class (b).

Domestic labour	£1 to £2 per month with food and clothing, whether engaged or not.

Class (c).

Casual labour, other than plantations.	2s. to 4s. per day with or without food and according to skill.

Indo-Chinese Coolies.

These are dealt with in Chapter VIII. They are only available to French subjects and at present rates of exchange their cost is lower than that of native labour.

Retail Prices.

The following are the approximate average prices of the principal articles of necessity in Vila during 1938:—

Fresh milk	4d. to 5d. per quart.
Flour	2d. to 2½d. per lb.
Rice	1½d. to 3d. per lb.
Sugar	2½d. to 5d. per lb.
Potatoes	2d. to 3d. per lb.
Fresh Meat	5d. to 1s. per lb.
Onions	3d. per lb.
Butter	1s. 9d. to 2s. 6d. per lb.
Tea	3s. 6d. to 4s. per lb.
Coffee	9d. to 3s. per lb.
Eggs	2s. 6d. to 3s. 6d. per dozen.
Poultry	3s. to 10s. each.
Tinned Meat	1s. 3d. to 2s. 6d. per lb.
Wood Fuel	5s. to 6s. per cubic metre.
Kerosene	8s. to 9s. per tin (4 gallons).
Petrol	8s. to 9s. per tin (4 gallons).

X.—EDUCATION AND WELFARE INSTITUTIONS.

There are no schools controlled or supported by the Condominium Government, nor are there any facilities for European children to receive anything but a primary education, which is not of a very high standard.

The town of Vila has three schools: (1) a school for girls, supported and controlled by the Sisters of the Sacred Heart Mission; (2) a boys' school, supported and controlled by the Marist Mission; and (3) an infants' school run by the French Government. There is also a mixed primary school at Segond Channel, Santo, under the auspices of the Marist Mission. Admission to these schools is not restricted to the children of Europeans and the fees are purely nominal.

The British and French Missions in the Group have various elementary schools and training institutions for the benefit of the natives. The Presbyterian Mission maintains a school at Tangoa, South Santo, for the training of mission teachers, and can accommodate up to 60 pupils. They also maintain mission schools throughout the Group. The Melanesian Mission have two schools at Lolowai, Aoba—one for native girls and one for native boys. The Seventh Day Adventist Mission have a utilitarian school at Aore Island, Santo, which is equipped with machinery for teaching all kinds of woodcraft. The Marist Mission also maintains schools in various islands of the Group.

All these institutions carry out excellent work among the natives and deserve commendation.

Apart from the educational work achieved by the missions, there is the equally important and beneficial medical work undertaken by the Presbyterian and Melanesian Missions The Presbyterian Mission maintains two well-equipped hospitals in the Group, and the Melanesian Mission one, the latter in addition to two medical aid posts. These hospitals and posts are primarily intended for native patients, but their services are available to white sufferers.

Many missionaries of all denominations have been trained in simple medicine and in the giving of injections. They give splendid service in the combating of native complaints such as yaws, hookworm, skin diseases and malaria, and in the sanitary and hygienic education of the native.

All the above institutions give instruction in the villages of their districts on simple hygiene, maternity, child welfare, etc.

XI.—COMMUNICATION AND TRANSPORT.

Shipping.

Europe.—A service of the Messageries Maritimes Line is maintained every six or seven weeks between the terminal ports of Dunkirk and Noumea (New Caledonia), via Vila, on both

inward and outward voyages via Panama. The period of the voyage is 45-55 days between Vila and Marseilles.

Australia.—The s.s. *Morinda* (Burns Philp Line) and the s.s. *Pierre Loti* (Messageries Maritimes) maintain respectively six-weekly and periodical communications with Sydney, New South Wales, the former via Norfolk Island and Lord Howe Island on the outward and homeward voyages from Sydney, and the latter via Lifou, Loyalty Islands, and Noumea, New Caledonia. The s.s. *Pierre Loti* also maintains a periodical service with Indo-China and Hong Kong. These steamers are subsidized by the Commonwealth Government and French Government respectively to carry mails.

Dutch Line.—A regular service is also maintained by a vessel of the Royal Packet Navigation (K.P.M.) Company between Saigon and Noumea, New Zealand and Sydney, touching at Vila every two months via Batavia, Papua and New Guinea.

Inter-Island.—The following steamers make periodical voyages round the Group. They have no fixed itinerary but usually connect at Vila with the French or British mail vessels: s.s. *Mirani* (Burns Philp (South Sea) Company, Limited) and m.v. *Polynésien* (Messageries Maritimes).

Vila is the port of entry of the Group. The tonnage entered and cleared during 1938 was as follows:—

Entered.

	Tons.	
British	16,903	(14 vessels)
French	122,702	(34 vessels)
Other	22,680	(10 vessels)
	162,285	

Cleared.

	Tons.	
British	18,754	(16 vessels)
French	121,736	(31 vessels)
Others	22,673	(10 vessels)
	163,163	

Ports.

Vessels of any size can enter the Port of Vila but the number of anchorages for large vessels is limited. All loading and discharging is carried out in lighters as the wharves and jetties at Vila are not suitable for vessels exceeding 100 tons.

Railways.

There are no railways in the Group. The small wharves, privately-owned by the commercial houses in Vila, are provided with rails for the transport of trolleys of merchandise and produce to and from the bulk store sheds.

Posts.

There is mail communication direct with Australia, and thence with other parts of the world, every few weeks. There is also direct communication every six or seven weeks with Europe, via Panama, but this route is much slower than the former. Considerable use is now being made of the air mails from Australia.

The mails, both inward and outward, are sorted at Vila and re-bagged for distribution round the Group by the inter-island steamers, which receive a grant from the Condominium Government for the services performed. The average time for European postal matter to reach Vila by the Australian mail route is 42 to 49 days. The Condominium Government has a postage stamp issue designed to represent the dual control. There are two series of stamps—one British and one French. Both are inscribed in international franc currency.

The postal matter handled by the Vila Post Office for 1938 was as follows:—

	From or to British territory.		*From or to French territory.*		*From or to other places.*		*Totals.*
	Received.	*Despatched.*	*Received.*	*Despatched.*	*Received.*	*Despatched.*	
Letters	28,000	24,000	56,000	41,000	5,000	5,000	159,000
Other articles ...	45,000	4,000	34,000	4,000	800	800	88,600
Registered articles	800	1,013	3,200	2,627	350	151	8,141
Air mail articles	200	436	600	1,762	100	66	3,164
Parcels post ...	1,216	10	594	25	77	—	1,922
Totals ...	75,216	29,459	94,394	49,414	6,327	6,017	260,827

Radio-Telegraph.

The Condominium Government maintains a radio-telegraph station at Vila. The station is powered at 1½ kilowatts and the call sign is FJX. A new transmitting and receiving set has been received and will shortly be working. Reception and transmission are carried out on wave-lengths of 17 and 40 metres and 21 and 37 metres respectively and also on the 600 and 800 metre bands. A daily service is maintained with the station at Suva, Fiji (VPD and VRP), and with the French Government station at Noumea, New Caledonia (FJP) and with certain private stations in the Group. The terminal charge of the Vila station is 3d. per word. The rates per word for telegrams despatched from Vila to Australia and the United Kingdom are as follows:—

To	*Ordinary.*	*Code.*	*Deferred.*	*D.L.T.*	*X.L.T.*
Australia ...	1s.	8d.	—	—	8d.
United Kingdom	2s. 2d.	1s. 4d.	1s. 1d.	9d. (Minimum charge of 25 words.)	9d. (Minimum charge of 10 words.)

The traffic handled by the station during the year under report was as follows:—

Class.	*Words received.*	*Words despatched.*
Official	20,917	25,257
Official relayed	20	—
Ordinary private	8,543	5,139
Ordinary relayed	5,884	—
Code	10,437	13,300
Code relayed	4,433	—
L.C.	592	674
L.C. relayed...	434	—
D.L.T.	98	449
D.L.T. relayed	75	—
X.L.T.	159	102
X.L.T. relayed	22	—
Totals	51,614	44,921

Total words received and despatched = 96,535.

There are privately owned wireless stations at Norsup (Malekula), Segond Channel (Santo), Ringdove Bay (Epi), and Lenakel (Tanna). These stations communicate with Vila and with inter-island shipping.

Roads.

With the exception of the islands of Efate, Tanna, and Tongoa, there are very few public highways in the Group suitable for wheeled transport. Tanna has several passable unmetalled roads, one of which traverses the island and is motorable. There is also a fair unmetalled road on the island of Tongoa. Vila, the capital and seat of Government, has several semi-metalled and unmetalled roads. These link up with the outlying districts and are all motorable. Most plantations keep motorable tracks for their own use. Some of these are linked up with tracks on other plantations and form useful means of communication.

Telephones.

Telephone communication is established only in the town of Vila and the outlying districts. The system is operated by a central exchange and the service is continuous. There are 63 telephones and 96 miles of wire.

The average annual subscription rate is £4 (unlimited calls).

XII.—PUBLIC WORKS.

The Public Works Department Staff normally consists of a Superintendent of Works and an Assistant, a European lorry driver (who also acts as foreman), a native roller driver and a small native road gang. In the absence of the Superintendent of Works or his Assistant, District Agents supervise public works being carried out in their respective areas.

The chief duties of the Public Works Department of the Condominium are the care and maintenance of Condominium roads, buildings, bridges, shipping lights, and the supervision of any new works undertaken. Most works are executed by contracts in various forms. In the case of roads these are generally in conjunction with work performed by the public works road gang and roller.

XIII.—JUSTICE, POLICE, AND PRISONS.

Justice.

The convention of 1914 provided for the immediate introduction of three Courts, namely the Joint Court, and the French and British National Courts, and the subsequent formation of two others—Courts of First Instance and Native Courts.

The scope and functions of these Courts is briefly as follows:—

(1) *Joint Court.*—The Court is composed of a British and a French Judge, with a President of neutral nationality. There is also a Public Prosecutor and a Native Advocate. The Joint Court is a Court of final adjudication in matters of purely Condominium nature. Broadly speaking, and subject to certain exceptions, its civil jurisdiction is confined to certain proceedings in respect of rights over immovable property—its chief function being that of a land Court governing the registration of indefeasible titles to land. It may also settle cases between any parties, native or non-native, brought before it by consent of both. Its criminal jurisdiction, broadly speaking, is confined to offences (*a*) connected with the recruitment of native labourers (*b*) committed by natives against non-natives, (*c*) committed by natives against natives in areas where the Native Code is in force and involving a penalty of over one year's confinement, and (*d*) against the Convention, or Joint Regulations passed in pursuance thereof, committed in areas where no Court of First Instance exists.

There is an appeal to the Joint Court from all judgments of Courts of First Instance and from important civil judgments of Native Courts. The Joint Court also has certain revisionary powers in criminal cases of Native Courts, and judgments of Courts of First Instance involving sentence of imprisonment.

(2) *Courts of First Instance.*—The composition of these Courts consists of a British and a French District Agent with an assessor of the nationality or legal system of the accused, chosen by lot, from a selected list. Their jurisdiction is over breaches of the 1914 Convention, or of Joint Regulations made thereunder, except those connected with the recruitment of native labour.

(3) *Native Courts.*—These are composed of either a British or French District Agent, assisted by two native Assessors. The British and French Agents preside over the Courts in turn, month and month about. A necessary corollary to the full and complete functioning of these Courts is the promulgation in the area concerned of the Native Code.

(4) *and* (5) *National Courts.*—The British and French Governments have established in the Group, in conformity with their existing legal systems, Courts with jurisdiction over all civil cases, other than those reserved to the Joint Court, and over all criminal cases in which a non-native is the defendent. In civil cases the jurisdiction over actions between non-natives belongs in some cases to the Court of the Power under whose law the contract was concluded, or the act or thing in question originated, and in other cases to the Court of the Power to which the defendant belongs. In criminal cases, non-natives are justiciable by the Court of their own nationality or the nationality applied to them.

Courts of First Instance have so far been set up in Central Districts Nos. 1 and 2 and the Northern Districts.

Non-natives of either British or French nationality must opt within one month of arrival for the British or French legal system.

A Code of Native Criminal Law has been instituted and two Native Courts—one in the Central District No. 1 and one in the Southern District—have been formed to administer Penal Law only within their competence and jurisdiction.

There are two practising lawyers in the Group, one British and one French.

The following judgments, other than civil, were recorded by the various Courts:—

	Nature of Judgment.	
	Fine.	*Imprisonment.*
Joint Court	9*	5
Courts of First Instance	48	2
Native Courts	31	43
Resident Commissioner's Court ...	3	65
British National Court...	—	—
Totals	91	115

* Includes six Courts of First Instance revisions and appeals.

Police.

The policing of the Group is carried out by two separate forces of armed native constabulary, British and French, each in the charge of a National Commandant under the orders of the respective Resident Commissioners. The headquarters are at Vila, and small detachments are located at the District Agencies on the islands of Tanna, Malekula, and Santo, respectively, in order to assist the District Agents in the carrying out of their duties.

The British force is composed of natives recruited from the islands of the New Hebrides, and the French force mainly of New Hebrideans with a few Loyalty Islanders. In addition, the French have enrolled a number of Tonkinese police for the purpose of facilitating police operations among the Tonkinese coolies in the Group. The respective strengths of the British and French native Constabularies are 40 and 40 Non-Commissioned Officers and men.

The duties of the native Constabulary consist in the maintenance of law and order among the native population of the more civilized areas, general police and patrol work and guarding of native prisoners, and the repression of native disorders.

Both the British and French Commandants, in addition to their duties as police officers of the Condominium, also act as police officers in so far as their own nationals are concerned, and are charged with the conduct of police cases before their respective National Courts.

The cost of the maintenance of the two forces is defrayed by the respective National Governments, except when the two corps are acting jointly, when the expenses are met from Condominium funds.

The usual term of enlistment for natives of the Group is two years. Some re-engage for further terms.

Prisons.

Each Government maintains its own national prison, which is situated in the town of Vila, and accommodation is provided for both natives and whites. The cost of maintenance of prisoners sentenced by the national tribunals is met from national funds, and that of natives sentenced by the Resident Commissioners and the Native and Mixed Courts, from Condominium funds.

There is no Condominium prison staff. Each Commandant acts as prison keeper and is responsible for the supervision of prisoners placed in his charge. He is assisted by police constables who act as warders.

In addition to the national prisons at headquarters each District Agency is provided out of Condominium funds with a temporary lock-up in which natives under short sentences are confined.

The class of native prisoner with which the Administration is called upon to deal is almost exclusively confined to those sentenced for breaches of local liquor laws and offenders against the provisions of the Native Penal Code.

Native Prisoners are employed on works of general utility, such as the making and cleaning of roads, weeding Government paddocks, transport of material to various Government buildings, etc.

The daily average of native prisoners confined in the British prison was 5·80 and in the French prison 7·5. No deaths occurred in the British prison. Generally speaking, the health of prisoners was good.

XIV.—LEGISLATION.

The following legislative acts came into force during the year:—

(*a*) *Joint Regulation No.* 1 *of* 1938.—Suspends the obligation to procure a permit to purchase liquor.

(*b*) *Joint Regulation No.* 2 *of* 1938.—Provides for precautions against the introduction of Infantile Paralysis.

(*c*) *Joint Regulation No.* 3 *of* 1938.—Repeals Joint Regulation No. 3 of 1937, permitting the use of explosives for fishing.

(*d*) *Joint Regulation No.* 4 *of* 1938.—Prohibits the catching and exportation of certain birds.

(*e*) *Joint Regulation No.* 5 *of* 1938.—Fixes the conditions of Leave for officers of the Condominium Service.

(*f*) *Joint Regulation No.* 6 *of* 1938.—Provides for the use of a new issue of Condominium Postage Stamps.

(*g*) *Joint Regulation No.* 7 *of* 1938.—Amends the rates of postage on Postal Articles sent in and from the New Hebrides.

(*h*) *Joint Regulation No.* 8 *of* 1938.—Provides for medical assistance to officers of the Condominium Service.

(*i*) *Joint Regulation No.* 9 *of* 1938.—Suspends Joint Regulation No. 2 of 1938 " Infantile Paralysis Precautions Act ".

(*j*) *Joint Regulation No.* 10 *of* 1938.—Provides for the restriction of lighting in the town of Vila on occasions of emergency.

(*k*) *Joint Regulation No.* 11 *of* 1938.—Provides for the organization of the public health services of the Condominium.

(*l*) *Joint Regulation No.* 12 *of* 1938.—Amends the Postal Tariff prescribed by Joint Regulation No. 7 of 1938.

XV.—BANKING, CURRENCY AND WEIGHTS AND MEASURES.

There are no banks in the New Hebrides. The Condominium Government, the National Administrations, commercial houses, most traders, and private individuals of any substance do their

banking in Australia and New Caledonia. Others make use of certain facilities provided by the more important commercial houses.

The official currencies of the New Hebrides are English and French. Both are legal tender up to the amounts permitted in England and France. Bank notes of the Banque de Indochine, Noumea, are accepted *pari passu* with those of the Bank of France, which guarantees them. Australian Currency has been officially recognized as a substitute for sterling at the market rate of exchange. Sterling currency is not often seen, Australian having become the chief medium of commerce in the Group since its devaluation below sterling parity. All three currencies are accepted for each other at the current rate of exchange.

The British and French systems of weight and measures are both employed throughout the Group.

XVI.—PUBLIC FINANCE AND TAXATION.

By Article 5 of the Convention of 1914 each of the two Powers is required to defray the expenses of its own Administration in the Group. The cost of the joint services is defrayed from local revenue. The joint services include finance, posts and telegraphs, customs, public works, ports and harbours, public health, the Joint Court and the Summary Courts, and the Lands Registry. In the event of revenue from local taxation proving insufficient to meet jointly approved expenditure, the two Signatory Powers contribute the deficit in equal proportions. Since the year 1921 such contributions were required in the years 1931, 1932, 1933, 1934 and 1935.

Revenue and Expenditure.

CONDOMINIUM REVENUE.

Year.	*French currency.* Fcs.		*British currency.* £	*Remarks.*
1934	1,329,249	or	10,719	Converted at fixed rate of fcs. 124 = £1.
1935			23,005	Current rate of exchange.
1936			22,220	
1937			27,729	
1938			27,614	

CONDOMINIUM EXPENDITURE.

Year.	*French currency.* Fcs.		*British currency.* £	*Remarks.*
1934	2,884,240	or	23,362	Converted at fixed rate of fcs. 124 = £1.
1935			26,102	Current rate of exchange.
1936			21,866	
1937			21,980	
1938			23,917	

The chief sources of Condominium Revenue are import and export taxes, which normally account for some four-fifths of the receipts. Other sources of income are postal and telegraphic receipts, port dues, court fees and fines, survey fees, trading licences, taxes on vehicles, Land Registry fees and miscellaneous receipts.

The following is a brief table of the principal import duties current during the year:—

General merchandise, unspecified... ...	12	per cent. *ad valorem*.
Gramophones, records, perfumery, lace, rifles, revolvers, and cartridges ...	20	
Spirits	30	
Tobacco	50	
Wines	5 to 12	
Petrol, lubricating and combustible oils...	10	
Kerosene	6	
Shotguns and cartridges, detonators ...	100	
Beer	1s. per gallon.	
Dynamite	1s. 10d. per lb.	
Fuse	6d. per 24 feet.	

No duty is levied on the following articles:—official uniforms and robes, live stock, books, cereals and seeds, ship's biscuits, coal, fertilizers, medical appliances and drugs for hospitals, microscopes, plants, vaccines and lymphs, fresh vegetables and fruit.

The main heads of taxation and actual yields for the year 1938 are tabulated as follows:—

	£
Inland Revenue (trading and other licences) ...	1,037
Post Office	5,079
Port dues	890
Court and survey fees	299
Import duties	16,186
Export duties	1,213
Wireless telegraph (gross)	923
Lands Registry	45

EXPENDITURE ON SERVICES ENTIRELY BRITISH.

	£
1934–35	9,346
1935–36	8,900
1936–37	9,600
1937–38	9,496
1938–39	9,187

This expenditure is defrayed from funds provided by Parliament on Civil Estimates, Vote for Colonial and Middle Eastern Services, Class II (9). Revenue consists of miscellaneous receipts, such as Court fees and fines, and rent, totalling approximately a hundred pounds annually. The expenditure on British services includes the personal emoluments of the British national

staff, Police Force, and District Agents, and maintenance of houses of officers and police barracks.

The French Government maintains at national expense services similar to the above.

XVII.—MISCELLANEOUS.

Lands and Survey.

Land owned by settlers in the New Hebrides was acquired originally from native owners, either by purchase or barter. Ownership at the present day is based on these native deeds, but such deeds do not constitute a valid title until judgments have been pronounced upon them by the Joint Court. The procedure in regard to obtaining indefeasible titles to land in the New Hebrides is set out in articles 22 to 27 of the Protocol of 1914. Approximately 1,000 claims have been lodged in the Joint Court representing an area of 2,150,000 acres, more or less. Many of these claims are overlapping or conflicting.

The adjudication of land claims on Efate was completed during 1932, and the majority of claims in the Southern Islands similarly dealt with during 1933 and 1934. During 1934 the survey of Epi and adjacent islands was commenced and was still in progress at the end of 1938.

The speed with which claims are dealt with is subordinate to a large extent to the progress of land surveys of the properties affected, and to the extent of complication of opposition.

A staff of surveyors is attached to the Court, but owing to the difficult nature of the country to be surveyed and identified, progress is necessarily slow. For financial reasons the staff of surveyors has lately been kept at a minimum.

In the adjudication of land claims, due consideration is given to the needs of the indigenous population that may be occupying lands coming up for registration. The Court instructs its surveyors to report on such matters in the course of their work, and is guided by such reports in deciding the desirability or necessity for making native reserves. The Anglo-French Protocol provides for the appointment of an official Native Advocate by the two Governments, whose duty it is to watch over native interests in land matters, to bring to the notice of the Court instances of usurpation of native land by settlers, and to assist natives in opposing claims before the Court. The Torrens system of land registration has been adapted to the New Hebrides.

APPENDIX.

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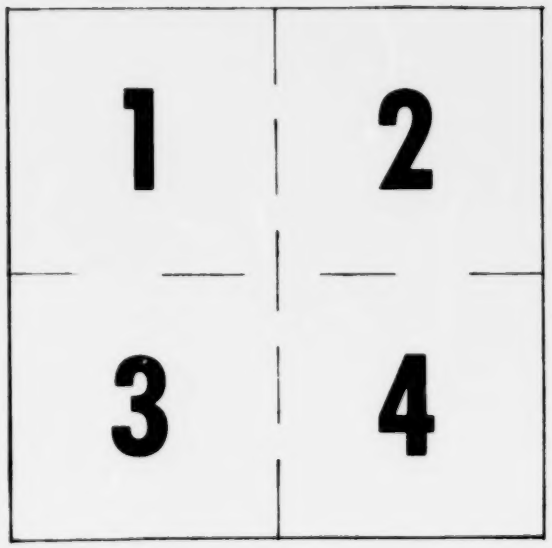
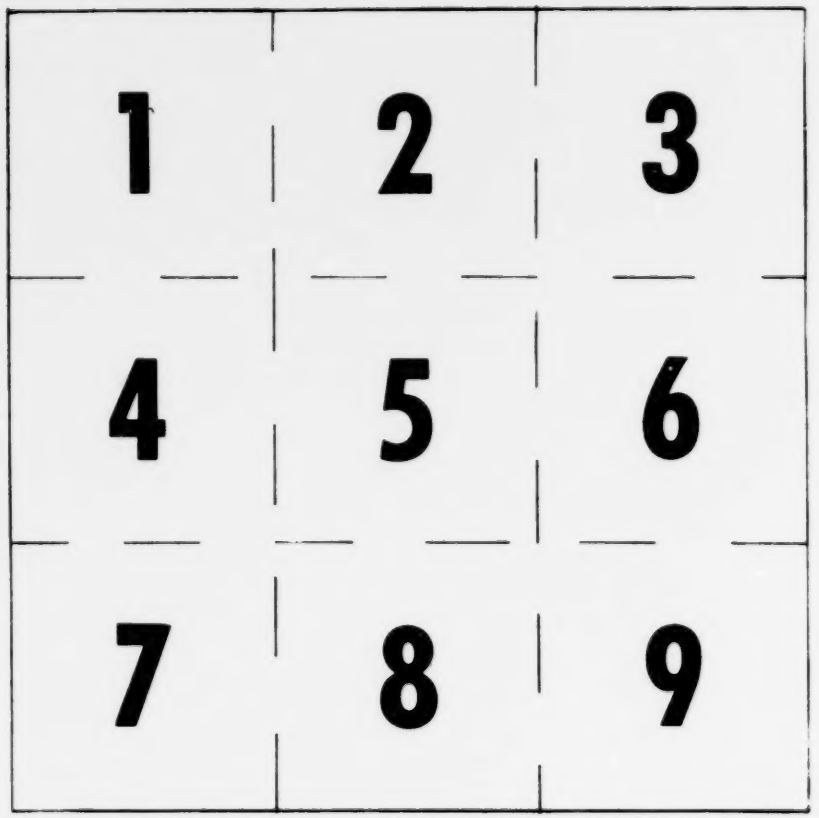
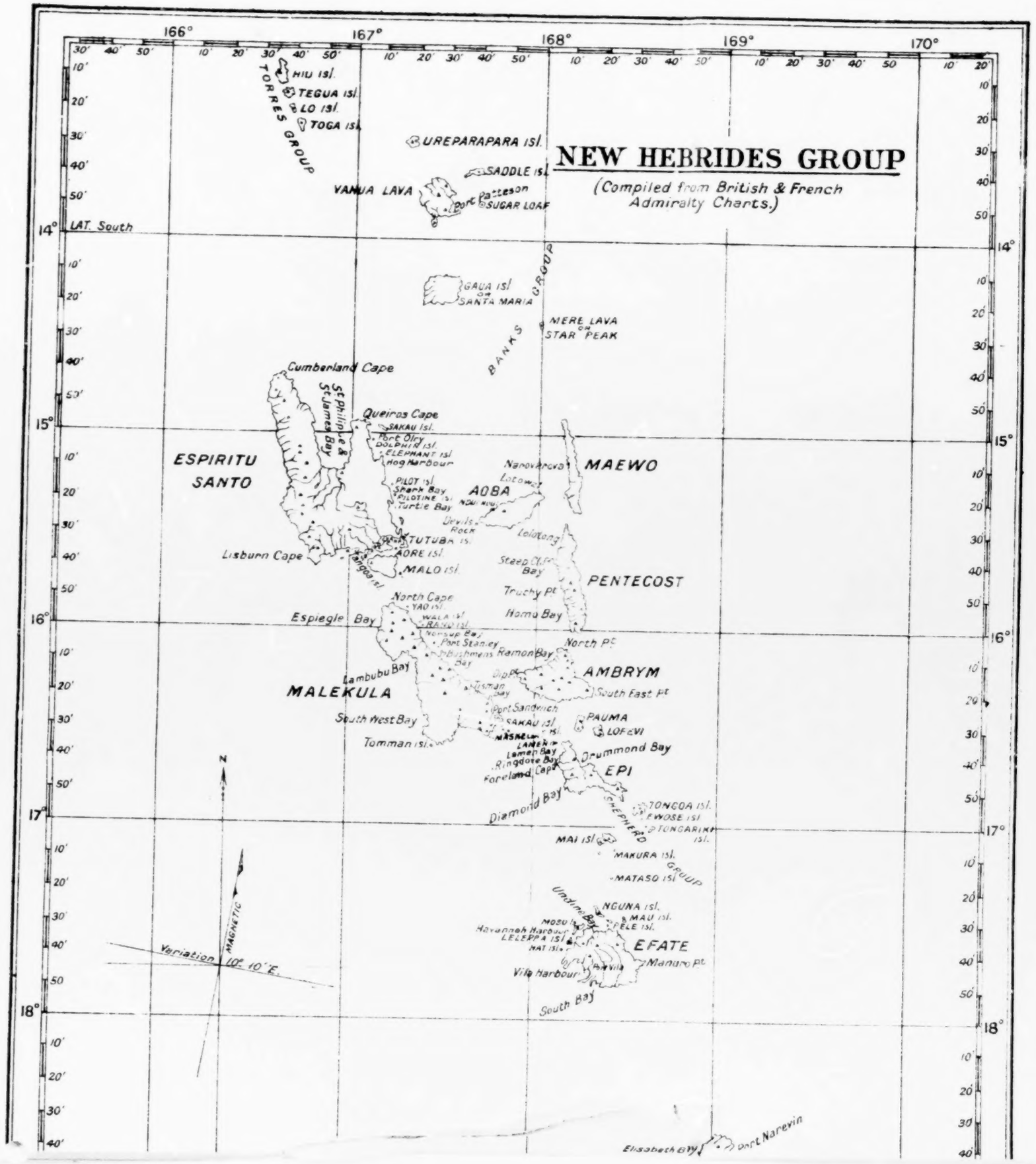
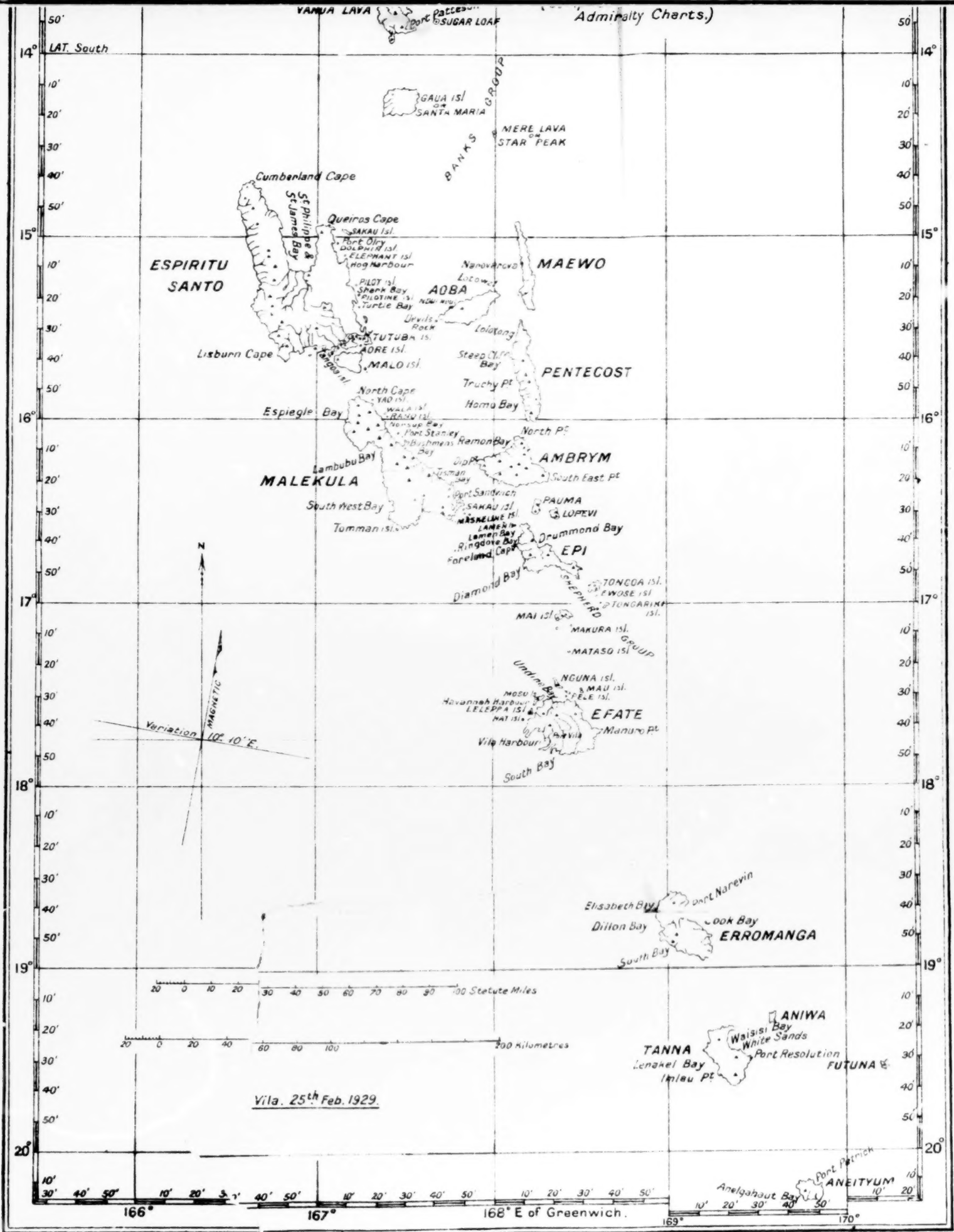





NEW HEBRIDES GROUP
(Compiled from British & French Admiralty Charts.)
166°
167°
168°
169°
170°
14°
15°
16°
17°
18°
LAT. South
TORRES GROUP
HIU ISL.
TEGUA ISL.
LO ISL.
TOGA ISL.
UREPARAPARA ISL.
SADDLE ISL.
VANUA LAVA
Port Patteson
SUGAR LOAF
GAUA ISL or SANTA MARIA
BANKS GROUP
MERE LAVA or STAR PEAK
Cumberland Cape
St Philippe & St James Bay
Queiros Cape
SAKAU ISL.
Port Olry
DOLPHIN ISL.
ELEPHANT ISL
Hog Harbour
ESPIRITU SANTO
PILOT ISL.
Speech Bay
PILOTINE ISL.
Turtle Bay
Nanovarova
Lakona
MAEWO
AOBA
Devils Rock
TUTUBA ISL.
AORE ISL.
Lisburn Cape
Tanga ISL.
MALO ISL.
Lolotong
Steep Cliffs Bay
PENTECOST
Truchy Pt
Homa Bay
North Cape
YAO ISL.
WALA ISL.
RANO ISL.
Espiegle Bay
Nonsup Bay
Port Stanley
Bushmens Bay
Ramon Bay
North Pt
AMBRYM
Lambubu Bay
MALEKULA
Dip Pt
Tasman Bay
South East Pt
Port Sandwich
PAUMA
LOF ε VI
SAKAU ISL.
South West Bay
Tomman ISL.
NASHELAM
LAMEN ISL.
Lamen Bay
Ringdove Bay
Foreland Cape
Drummond Bay
EPI
Diamond Bay
SHEPHERD GROUP
TONGOA ISL.
EWOSE ISL
TONGARIKI ISL.
MAI ISL
MAKURA ISL.
MATASO ISL
Undine Bay
NGUNA ISL.
MAU ISL.
MOSU ISL.
PELE ISL.
Havannah Harbour
LELEPPA ISL
NAT ISL.
EFATE
Manuro Pt
Vila Harbour
Port Vila
South Bay
N
MAGNETIC
Variation 10° 10' E.
Elisabeth Bay
Port Narevin



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